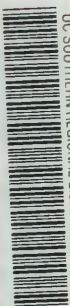


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# Ernest, the Pilgrim:

A DRAMATIC POEM.

BY

J. W. KING.

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LONDON:

PARTRIDGE AND CO.,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1859.



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TO MY VALUED FRIEND

AND

INSTRUCTOR,

ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI.

853829





# ERNEST,

THE PILGRIM:

A Dramatic Poem.

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YOUTH'S OPENING DAY.

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HAIL happy Dawn ! Come blue-eyed May !  
'T is a royal Saxon holiday ;  
The sun 's i' th' east with his orient steeds,  
A thousand hills, a thousand meads,  
Regions of beauty and wild delight  
Burst from the swarthy shades of Night :  
Spring unbosoms her brightest blush,  
Anthemned from many a snowy bush ;  
Meadows all laugh with wakening flowers,  
The merry bee hies to the daisy bowers ;  
Right over head the sweet lark sings,  
Down in the village the anvil rings ;  
On the old barn the pigeons bask,  
In the dark pond the ducklings flask ;

Up the broad lane where the bramble blows  
Hearty and happy the herdsman goes,—  
Leading his flock with a quaintly lay  
Echoed in many a pleasant way ;  
Gadding gossipping Weather-so-wise  
Opens her window and rubs her eyes,  
Looks for her signs so odd and olden,—  
“ O but the morning’s bright and golden ; ”  
Daws circle over the castle walls,  
The guardians of its silent halls ;  
Wildly as an unmeasured theme,  
Dashes and foams the forest stream,  
And ripples along the bosky glade,  
Silverly leaping the old cascade ;  
The milkmaid calls her lowing cows  
Under the nodding beechen bows,  
And as she merrily fills her pail,  
Young Roger comes whistling down the vale,  
Lifts her sweet burthen over the stile,  
Squeezing her willing hand the while ;  
The smoke from many a croft up-curls  
Into the deep empyrean worlds ;  
Stretched like old Titans at their ease  
Lie solitudes of hoary trees,  
Whose mysteries haunt our childish dreams,  
While throned in great Hyperion’s beams,—  
Mountains in glorious grandeur rise,  
The monarchs of all the centuries ;

The vales awake, the uplands ring  
With the rich minstrelsy of Spring ;  
And not a flower that scents the sod  
But smiles its morning prayer to God !  
A fairer world, a brighter day  
Ne'er hailed thy coming Beautiful May !

(Gaibering Chorus.)

Awake with the morning, arise with the sun,  
The cushat is cooing, the bells have begun,  
Away to the meadows, the crofts, and the bowers,  
And gather the dew from the hedges and flowers ;  
From her gold-glinting tresses young garlanded Spring  
Sheds Edens of joy over everything ;—  
Come, come from the uplands and vallies away,  
To welcome our lady the Queen of the May.

Bring flowers from the sunny-lands, leaves from the trees,  
And braid the bright hair floating wild in the breeze ;  
Swains hie to the dwellings where wait the sweet fair,  
Wreath their brows with white hawthorn and with  
                them repair

To join merry hearts round the May-pole so green,  
Where sun-beam and beauty shall gladden the scene ;  
The shepherds are piping their gathering lay,  
To welcome our lady the Queen of the May.

She comes in the spring-dawn of beauty and joy,  
With health on her cheek and a smile in her eye ;  
She 's fair as the morning, while light as a fawn  
She trips o'er the meads from the goldening lawn ;  
It echoes from village, and mountain, and vale,—  
Young Jessie 's the bonniest flower of the Dale ;  
So come, and come all, the glad summons obey,  
'To welcome our lady the Queen of the May.

Peal out tumultuous bells, the welkin rings  
With thousand-throated laughter ; Gladness strings  
Her pearly smiles about the brow of Morn,  
And claps her hands as tho' a god were born.  
Lusty and jubilant with mirthful song  
They leave the merry woods and bear along  
The Saxon May-pole. Comes the jaunty train,  
Garlanded oxen, and the festooned wain,  
With greeting youth from many a mile away,  
Mingling rich pleasance with the dawn of day.  
Up busy villagers, sling wide your doors,  
O'er Langley Dale the jauncing pageant pours ;  
They come brim full of mirth, thro' meadows streaming,  
Beauty and love from many a bright eye beaming ;  
Dance to the merry pipe and roundelay,  
And hail sweet Jessie queen of roscate May :  
Out from your smithy, bare your brawny arm  
Thor's bronzed son, rear up the tapering charm  
High i' th' songful air, with hawthorn crown  
And wreathes of dewy blossoms circling down ;

Gather ye maidens round the rustic throne  
Whose future honours yet may be your own ;  
Lead lovely Jessie to her regal seat,  
And strew your gathered favours at her feet ;  
Let glee and gladness, dance and lusty song,  
Till golden eve this sunny day prolong.

Beside bleak Rowdon's haunted mill  
Are seated two age-stricken men,—  
Old shepherds of a neighbouring glen,  
Keeping their sheep upon the hill.  
At early dawn they long have met,  
Nor parted till the sun has set ;  
For many years have strolled together,  
Over the hills and through the heather ;  
Discussed the daily circling news  
Gathered from Gossip's general mews,—  
Old Dapples of the " Good Intent,"  
Where meets the Village Parliament ;  
Recite old legends in rude rhymes,  
And praise the glorious by-gone times  
When wrongs were few, and sorrows less,  
When scarce a haunt of wretchedness,  
Or pauper home, or pauper band  
Cast their dark shadows o'er the land.  
The sermon at the church on Sunday,  
Claims their gravest speech on Monday ;

Then, what good gentlefolk were there,  
Neighbours, and buxom village fair.

Now if it be the first of May,  
Or weal or woe, 'tis hard to say,  
But as he reached the 'customed place,  
News might be pictured in the face  
Of one—a ruffled-hearted soul  
Who never studies to controul  
One impulse of the village art ;  
And earnestly does he impart  
All he has heard, and somewhat more,  
At many a gadding Granny's door :—

ROBERT.

Well Joseph, we have met again,  
Tho' older, still we're hale ;  
I fancy there'll be glorious fun  
To day in Langley Dale !  
Lord, love ye, at the peep o' dawn,  
Our place was all alive,—  
Lads running here, girls buzzing there,  
Like bees about a hive :  
The May-pole 's decked so trig and trim,  
'T would glad your eyes to see 't ;  
The lass who wears the crown to-day  
Must nimbly move her feet.

They 've cleared the castles lonely halls,  
And hung 'em round wi' green,  
And there the lord of Avondell  
Invites the young May Queen :  
Lasses and lads the country round,  
Are all expected there ;  
And many a merry heart there 'll be,  
And many a winsome fair.  
'T is like the days when we were young,  
And spite of aches and pains,  
I feel the old blood warm again,  
And dance along my veins :  
What say ye Joseph ? Shall we go,  
And take the dear old dames ?  
Young Avondell of course must see  
The Burnams and the Grames !

JOSEPH.

Well, p'raps I may ; but I've no faith  
In all this great to-do,  
'T will turn the country-side all crazed  
If half the story's true.  
I like the young folk to enjoy  
Their Saxon holiday,  
And cheerfully I welcome in  
These dawns of fair May :

But, Robert, kings are only men,  
Be-praise them as we will ;—  
Though purple clothe the regal form,  
The heart is human still.  
This proud young lord of Avondell  
Is Pleasure's darling child,  
Born in the lap of haughty Wealth,  
Tutored in precepts wild ;  
Scarce had he thrown his boyhood off  
When home was cast behind,  
And fortune, freak, and folly flew  
Like chaff before the wind :  
He scoffs at want and wretchedness,  
And spurns the needy poor ;  
'T is only reckless gaiety  
Finds favour at his door.  
The lad is not so much to blame,  
He saw it in his fire,  
And no good mother lives to quench  
The dissipating fire.  
Could yonder gloomy castle tell,  
The deeds committed there  
In bygone days, when armoured Might  
Went forth from many a lair,—  
The stoutest heart would quake with awe,  
And shun the jocund scene  
Where men have groaned in life-long chains,  
And fearful death has been.



But let me not foretoken ill  
    When good may be in store ;  
Some future day we 'll talk about  
    The Avondells of yore.  
Ay, truly there 's the merry bells,  
    The frolic has begun ;  
We 'll leave our sheep awhile, belike,  
    And peep among the fun.  
But stay,—a stranger comes this way,  
    A foldier from the wars ;  
And slaughtering work they 've had of it,  
    Grim death and battle-scars :  
He stops—and looks—and smiles—and weeps,  
    As though some joy was near ;  
He listens—and right well he may,  
    The bells ring mortal clear.  
No passing scene, however fair,  
    Should move a foldier's tears ;—  
'T is some heart-picture of the past,  
    Some promised bliss of years.  
A good May morning to you friend,  
    What news of distant lands ?  
Has England crushed the despot down,  
    And gyved his scourging hands ?

## SOLDIER.

A good May morning friends to you,  
And many many more ;  
Ay, England is as brave to-day  
As in the days of yore.  
We fought beneath a summer's sun,  
Thro' many a winter's day,  
Where Want, Disease, and Nakedness  
Swept stalwart holls away.  
I've seen the bravest of the brave  
Lay down their hero-lives  
Before a deadlier foe than War,  
Or cursed Siberian gyves.  
S' death, how we fought the northern hordes  
In every fatal den ;  
And for their famined citadels  
We gave them precious men :  
Each battle brought us victory,  
Peace glory-crowned hath come ;  
And the foldier hails with bounding heart  
His country and his home.—  
Dear scenes of infancy and youth,  
And many an oft-told tale,  
Once more, once more, I look upon  
My own sweet Langley Dale.

JOSEPH.

Is Langley Dale your native home?  
Well, we can say the same!  
Why I have known both old and young!  
Pray soldier,—what's your name?

SOLDIER.

In yonder cottage I was born  
That stands beneath the elms;—  
Shepherds!—I left,—but ah, the dread  
My gladness overwhelms.

ROBERT.

You left a wife and daughter, man,  
Joseph, you'll mind it well;  
They took him from the "Good Intent;"  
Your name is—Andrew Bell.

SOLDIER.

It is—oh does my dear wife live?  
My daughter, where is she?  
Has Langley Dale one kindred tie,  
One heart to welcome me?

JOSEPH,

Your wife's asleep beneath the flowers,  
But God has spared your child,—  
As sweet a flower as ever bloomed  
Upon a daisied wild ;  
That child will welcome you I'm sure  
With all a daughter's love,  
And soothe your heart's deep forrowing  
For her who lives above.

SOLDIER.

Alas, that I should thus have braved  
The battle's deadly roar,  
Only to hear the bitter words—  
“Your Mary is no more.”  
Sweet be your rest poor widowed one,  
’T was hard to part us so,—  
Tearing me from life's happy hearth  
To fill our cup with woe :  
Come Death in all your grimest shapes,  
With direst horrors rise,  
I'll brave them all a hundred times,  
But give me back my wife.  
Dear Mary dead?—Oh, what on earth  
Can cheer my failing years?

JOSEPH.

Your child my friend, your only child,  
Left with a mother's tears,  
To Him who heard her dying words,  
And blest her latest prayer,  
Keeping for this auspicious day  
A joy you soon may share.

SOLDIER.

Good shepherds take me to my child,  
I long to see her face,  
With all the friends whom death has spared  
About our native place.

JOSEPH.

Ay, that we will right cheerfully,  
We'll cross the village green,  
The May-pole's deckt, and rumour goes—  
Your Jessie's to be Queen!  
Young Avondell is coming too  
The revelries to keep:  
Robert—your crook and let's away,  
The dogs will mind the sheep.

There's Beauty and Gladness in Avondell's Halls ;  
Where Ruin and Silence have reigned ;  
Proud forms cast their shadows around the old walls  
Where the night-haunting owl hath domained.  
From the heather-clad hills, from the braes far away,  
The noble, and gallant, and fair,  
Come flushed with the mirthful adornings of May,  
And welcome old Avondell's heir.  
Throw open the portals, found trumpets and drums,  
Let the banners of yore be unfurled !  
For the lord to the Home of his Ancestors comes  
To revel in Future's bright world.  
There are England's fair daughters of queenliest mould,  
All radiant with royalest mirth ;  
There are dashing chevaliers, and gallants so bold,  
Of proudest and haughtiest birth.  
Give welcome, fair Sirs, let it ring out on high,  
To the daughter of Verulam's Knight,—  
Like an April beam from a goldening sky  
She comes in a flood of delight :  
And Joy shall be sweetest enchantress to-day,  
The shrine of Devotion and Love ;  
Come every maiden, come gentles away,  
The sun's in the welkin above :  
Hie, hie ye a-Maying true revellers all,  
Give clamorous Pleasure the rein ;  
'T is Jessie invites you, respond to her call  
Till Langley Dale echoes again.

Who comes in hot haste by the old ruined mill.

Skimming earth like an arrow a-flight ?

He fords the broad river—he breasts the steep hill,—

Say, what is thine errand, Sir Knight ?

'T is a message of moment, a royal command,

Give him audience Avondell's lord ;

Behold loyal hearts a gay pageant at hand,

Proclaim it with lusty accord.

The Warder's strong summons re-echoes again,

They gather, a noble array ;

And England's fair Queen sallies out with her train

To grace the young dawning of May.

*(A Chorus of Voices.)*

They have wreathed her fair brow, they have strewed at

A banquet of garlands her bright eyes to greet ; [her feet,

The welkin is ringing with mirthfullest song,

Which the gladfomest similes, and sweet voices prolong ;

From Castle and Cottage full many a pair

Are linked happy-hearted the frolic to share ;

The dance has begun, and they foot it away,

To welcome our lady the Queen of the May.

SOLDIER.

No change, my native village, none,

To me thou art the same

As yesterday ;—but friends !—they 're gone,  
I scarcely know a name.  
That gate ! I 've swung upon it oft  
When truanting from school,  
And shunned in that old stable-loft  
The master's heavy rule.  
Where yonder garland waves around  
The little cottage door,  
My Mary and her love I found,  
Which none had found before ;  
And in that dear Old Church she gave  
Me all she had to give ;—  
My wife !—but thou art in the grave ;  
Dear Lord, did she but live,  
The earth were full of human bliss,  
And I a very child,  
Seeing a heaven of happiness  
In every dawn that smiled.  
Ay, now 'tis all remembered well,  
Even Shepherd thy good face,  
With many a legend thou didst tell  
About our native place.  
Are all thy heart's dear treasures dead ?  
Or do some linger still ?



## JOSEPH.

Gone like the rainbow's beauty, fled  
Behind Death's darkling hill,  
With here and there a lingering ray,  
To cheer the lessening road,  
Ere life's pale sun shall set for aye,  
And Man go up to God !  
And you have still a charm on earth,—  
Gladness with mournful sorrow ;  
Dark Yesterday has led you forth  
To welcome bright To-morrow.  
Look round about you, what a joy  
Beams over all the village :—  
Each passer, to the chubby boy,  
Seems bent on pleasure-pillage.  
And soon you 'll find some kindred souls  
Whose love hath known no change ;—  
Hark !—how the wildering trumpet rolls,  
Why Robert,—this is strange !  
You have not gathered all the news,  
Since round the " Good Intent,"  
And underneath the dark old yews,—  
'T is like a joustment :  
Such yeomen, knights, and archers bold,  
And gleemen famed in story,  
Fair maids like stars above the wold  
When Night hath all her glory.

It might a Royal Revel be,  
A regiment of State :—

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## ROBERT.

By goles it is !—Why don't you see,  
There's lords and ladies great  
A-dancing with the villagers  
Right kedgy on the green !  
I wouldn't a-lost this blessed fight  
For all the fights I've seen.  
Be hanged if I didn't dream last night  
About some wonderous scenes,—  
'T were golden halls, and maidens bright,  
And lots of kings and queens,  
And here they are !—

## JOSEPH.

Stay, not so fast  
Good Robert ; lords will do  
For Langley Dale, though kings have past  
Our loyal village through ;  
Aye, and the scourge of kings. Strange tales  
Are told of iron men  
Thundering like torrents through the vales  
Till cowards shook again.

The Queen!—as I'm a Burnam; well  
I know her royal face;—  
It once my shepherd's lot befell  
To see that mighty place,  
The living Babylon. 'T was then  
I saw that glittering show,—  
The monarch and the citizen  
In regal splendour flow.  
How gracious thus to leave her state  
And see our May-day fun:  
Soldier! your queen!—so good and great,  
Whose victories you have won:  
I give you joy this hopeful hour,  
Since greater bliss is near;  
In yonder blue-bell smothered bower  
Is all your heart holds dear;  
See where she comes in beauty's pride,  
To lead the merry dance;  
And Avondell is by her side,  
You'll know them at a glance.

## SOLDIER.

My child!—my daughter! Can it be?  
My Jessie, art thou there?  
It cannot—yet it must be thee?  
How comely, O how fair;

Thy mother's form, thy mother's smile,  
Thy mother's opening charms;—  
Flow on ye grateful tears awhile,  
Ere with these eager arms  
I clasp her fondly to my breast,  
With all the love she brings :—  
I would not give this hour so blest  
For all the wealth of kings.

There is a beauty passing portraiture,  
There is a love, a pure and holy love,  
The utmost eloquence can never reach,  
Though flashing from the spirit of a god :—  
The infant laughing with its fincless eyes  
Upon the cradling knee ; the happy mother,  
Singing soft lullabys, or bending o'er  
Her nestling with a heaven-confiding prayer ;  
The maiden—culling from each grace a flower  
T' adorn the precious garden of the soul ;  
Hearts, sorrow-wrung, bewedded unto death ;  
Virtue and Truth midst Wretchedness and Want ;  
Bright eyes that weep with human tendernefs ;  
Charity maskt ; and Love that dieth not,  
Nor changeth, but flows sweetly on for ever.  
Rear your ethereal pyramids of Thought  
Ye herculean thunderers of the Muse ;  
Enthroned your laureate thereon, and he  
Shall fail to touch that heaven of welling love,

Flooding two kindred bosoms—lost and found,  
Time-mourned, yet memory-blest, and these—  
The foldier and his child!

There's a torrent of joy in the veteran's heart  
As he kisses the brow of his daughter,  
And feels that he never again shall depart  
From the home where a stranger he fought her;  
Heart-welcomes come warm from the old and the young,  
Sweet smiles from the fountains of Beauty,  
Loud pæans of pastoral gladness are sung  
To Jessie—the Soldier—and duty:  
And Royalty leans from its sceptre to-day,  
And joins in the rapturous greeting,  
Huzzas for our lady the Queen of the May  
The bliss of the foldier completing.  
Dance cheerily swains, trip merrily maids,  
Give life to the vigorous measure;  
Ere Philomel hallows the deepening shades  
Drink in freshest heartfuls of pleasure.  
'Tis the banquet of Flora, the robing of Spring,  
Ye archers, with strong-bow and quiver,  
Make the jolly old woods with your jubilant ring,  
As the challenging target ye shiver:  
Free lords of the forest, Maid Marian's heart  
Beats high at your revel so daring,  
And bright eyes are winging Love's gentlest dart,  
Ensheath it in bosoms unerring.

Grim Avondell yet shall be glad with delight,  
With beauty the proudest and fairest ;  
And Memory treasure the day and the night,  
Sweet Langley Dale's brightest and rarest.

There is no day without its darkling cloud ;  
There is no hearth without its mournful shroud ;  
There is no joy that brings not in its wake  
Or light or burdened sorrow ; and we make  
A farcical mockery of human life  
By picturing Araby where snows are rife.  
It seems but yesterday when, hand in hand,  
Young Walter and his Nanny graced the scene—  
May's happy mingling on the village green,  
By gentlest winds of heart affection fanned.  
Hard by the brawling Gade their cottage smiles  
In lowly garniture : O'er meads and stiles  
You stroll along, and pass the ivied church,  
When by a shady nook its nodding porch—  
With honeysuckles and white roses hung,  
Peeps from a bower of olden trees among.  
The song of marriage joy has echoed there ;  
And the deep sorrow-sob, the wail of care.  
O, they were very happy : Round their knees  
Sprung like young oaklings by their parent trees,  
Fair girls and boys to bless their little home :  
But dark Death hung Joy's sunny halls with gloom.

Mary and Herbert they are with them still ;  
Eliza and her brother Johnny died—  
Died ere the daisies bloomed : But 't was God's will.  
And they are sleeping in their little grave  
Upon the sacred hill, where wild-flowers wave  
O'er many a mother's joy and father's pride.  
Dear Nanny weeps, for she did love them so,  
And Walter bows beneath the heavy woe ;  
But 't is the first of May, and he will bring  
His gentle wife a May-day offering,  
And breathe unto her sobbing soul a song  
Of hope that Peace will come again ere long :—

“ Here are sweetest wild-flowers, Nanny,  
“ Wild-flowers from the world's parterre,  
“ Jewelled with morning dew-drops, Nanny,  
“ O, but 't is a nosegay rare !

“ See what clustering household blossoms !  
“ Each a funny sylvan gem ;—  
“ But for the dear love I bear thee,  
“ They had still been on the stem.

“ Birds are singing, shepherds piping,  
“ Rivers dancing in the sun ;  
“ Uplands laughing with the treasures  
“ Autumn piles for every one.

“ From the green-lane’s hazle alley  
“ Comes the black-bird’s golden lay ;  
“ All the Dale is full of music,  
“ Soon, too soon to pass away.

“ Gladness like a gleeful maiden,  
“ Hies the blue-bell woods among,  
“ Skips across the breezy meadows  
“ To the village mirth and song.

“ Gathered round the wreathed May-pole  
“ Are the happiest, merriest hearts,  
“ Throbbing with the lusty pleasure  
“ This sweet day to youth imparts.

“ Thus we strolled and thus we mingled,  
“ In that happy time gone by,  
“ When the young and ardent spirit  
“ Knew nor sorrow nor a sigh.

“ Now life’s cares surround us, Nanny,  
“ Yet there’s joy for every ill ;  
“ Heaven hath frowned upon us, Nanny,  
“ But we’ll trust in Heaven still.

“ Death came to our happy ingle,  
“ Stole away two pretty flowers ;



“ Weep we must, and yet remember—

“ Two dear Nanny still are ours.

“ What is life however golden,

“ If the fount of love be dry ?

“ What is love but sweet contentment,

“ Hoping, trusting till we die ?

“ Cheer thee then, be ever trusting,

“ Smile and greet the Saxon day

“ Nature, as a very lover,

“ Welcomes merry-hearted May.”

Noon's burning beams are sheathed i' th' whispering fea,  
The lifeless birds are piping in the woods,  
The panting Hours unburden to the breeze,  
And wanton o'er the meads like girls a-play ;  
From bristling crags and mountains wreathed with light,  
Mighty Hyperion holds his westering course,  
Gathers his robe of congregated fires,  
And, couched upon a throne of gorgeous clouds,  
Sinks into glory like a weary god :—  
While Evening—gentle harbinger of Night,  
Comes queenly forth where whitest hawthorns bloom,  
And wanders through a shower of melodies  
To breezy uplands and wild-blossomed knolls  
Where young May walkt to greet the ruddy Dawn.

All earth melts into Eden as she looks  
On gleaming ruins, silvan-crested woods,  
And dells of dewy flowers, till Hesperus,  
With soft entreatment, leads her by the hand  
To grace May's closing banquet with her smiles.

Up from their village revelry come all  
The youth and manhood, mingled with fair maids,  
Old men and matrons, joyous as the hour,  
To join the bright and pleasure-beaming throng  
Which fills the hoary halls and avenues,  
And stern old towers, ivy-mailed, and courts  
Time-wintered, whence hath pealed the thunder-throes  
Of battle, the wild clarion of the chase,  
Defiant Power flashing in ponderous steel,  
The yule-tide revel and the minstrelsy  
Of ancient bards, rehearsing Avondell's  
High prowess, chaunting lays to loveliness  
Beneath the entrancement of her Saxon charms.  
Morning has welcomed Jessie young May-Queen,  
Noon her long-lost father : and Evening now  
Calls forth her silvan train to give the maid  
A gracious escort to the broad old lawns,  
Laughing with viands from the lap of Wealth,  
And gemmed with lovely women whose bright eyes  
Make conquest where puissant chivalry,  
With martial front defies the world of arms.

Clear piping shepherds lead the rustic host  
In ever circling bands, while answering notes  
Ring merrily the deepening woods among ;  
And bursting like a sea from Druid shades,  
The flood of mirth and music floats along  
Like Pleasure summing on a sunny bay.  
The broad-browed trees clap their great hands with joy,  
The minstrel breeze discourses sweetest airs,  
And murmuring leas a mingling chorus raise,  
Till aery Sapphos iterate the theme,  
And bear it buoyant through the boundless spheres.

Mirth thou art regal : Worthy now to wed  
Two human streams in kindred harmony ;  
To hide behind the golden clouds of May  
The stormy shadows of contentious birth.  
How all the revellers revel to the full,  
Brim up each other's cup with reckless heed,  
And speak with earnest eyes and genial souls,—  
A right good-heartedness that knows no rank  
But Pleasure. Hoary men, beneath old trees,  
Watch with a jocund smile the twinkling feet  
Threading the mossy floor, and wander back  
To days of Eld when they were just as young ;  
Call many a passing fair by name, and greet  
With lusty jauntiness their rural queen,  
Panting with joy and whirling thro' the dance,

Her hand within her lover's!—O, he loves,  
 And Ernest loves the maid. Old Joseph knew  
 It long: Has met them oft upon the hills,  
 And blest the orphans for their kindred worth:

“ May this fair night  
 “ Leave no dark blight  
 “ Upon their opening path,  
 “ Nor joyous Avondell  
 “ Have yet a tale to tell  
 “ Of Ruin, Wretchedness, and Wrath.”

The bronzed soldier leans upon his staff,  
 Parental fondness radiant in his face:  
 Another day must render his account  
 Of wars and victories; this new-born bliss  
 Hath overflowed the flush-gates of his soul;  
 Death's grim array hath changed to beauteous life;  
 The full-horned moon, which erst with dewy beam  
 Robed ghastly fields of dying and the dead,  
 Now opes the portals of serene night,  
 Ascends her azure throne and pours out floods  
 Of glory to the lowing meads,—higher,  
 Yet brighter, gemmed, and wreathed, and crowned with  
 Come chivalry, and love, and lowly worth,      [stars.  
 Give every bounding pulse to this great hour:  
 The bale-fires blaze along the guardian hills,  
 Ten thousand stars are glistering through the trees,

Ten thousand worlds look down upon the scene,  
And village minstrels gleefully shall sing  
The May-Queen's gathering by the murmuring Gade,  
Where ancient Avondell in feudal pride  
Holds hoary wardenship of Langley Dale.

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SWEET ALFORD.

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THERE is a heaven which myriads know not of,  
A social world, confiding and replete  
With ever-beaming sympathy ;—the love  
Of kindred souls, clinging with yearnings sweet  
Around a happy hearth. O home most meet  
For faithful shepherds, pastors for the Lord,—  
His high and holy calling whom we greet  
As friend and father,—teacher of the Word  
Of Life, instinct with blessings whereso'er 't is heard.

Sweet Alford ! oft returning Memory dwells  
On thy dear pleasancess ; repictures all  
Thy beauties ; listens to the village bells,  
And the wild music of the waterfall ;

Lingers around our boyhood's home to call  
The bright days back again when forth we strayed  
In merry troupes and in such glee withal—  
The woodland world did seem as if 't were made [fade.  
Of youth that could not die and flowers that would not

Fair is the scene without. Within, 'tis calm  
Yet full of gladness. Bright eyes are there,  
And lovely forms, and bosoms ever warm :  
The poor and needy are the pastor's care,  
And all the blossoms of his rude parterre  
He nourishes with kindly hand, and found  
Amidst its greenery a sapling rare,—  
A homeless little boy ; yet not disowned,  
For Ernest's father lived and died upon the ground.

And his good master promised he would be  
A parent to the boy,—and kept his word :  
And Ernest wanders down the willow lea  
With Jessie Bell when the sweet thrush is heard  
Upon the snowy thorn, and woods are stirred  
By summer winds.—They both were parentless  
Ere Andrew found his memory-nestled bird ;  
But Langley Dale oped many a door to Jess,  
She is so loveable, so full of gentleness.

Last New Year's Eve—that universal time  
When every home is beaking with mirth,

When the old bells ring out their merriest chime,  
And Winter banquets to the Coming Birth:—  
Last New Year's Eve the Rector's rural hearth  
Was glad with love and laughter; and amid  
The favoured ones sweet Jessie Bell stood forth  
And gave her little heart away, yet hid  
The secret from young Ernest—or she thought she did.

How bright the picture. All the stars are out,  
The cold clear moon shines on the white, white hills;  
Young hearts seek Alford's threshold with a shout,  
Where Parson Frank full many a smile distils  
From mellow Age; where madam dons her frills,  
Her cozy coif and gown of filken sheen;  
Where three fair daughters come, like gushing rills,  
With half-enbosomed beauty;—and the green,  
Glad Christmas circles round the little festive scene.

For forty New Year's Eves the good, good man  
Has gathered round him all his rustic flock,  
Their heartless joys and dawning hopes to fan  
With charity and love. No creed-reared rock  
Is he to crush the throne of Truth, and mock  
The universal sovereignty of God.  
His heart flows unto men; his golden stock  
Of lore—long-gathered on the busy road  
Of life, is free to all who enter his abode.



And many a villager can now recall  
His heart's beneficence ; the tales he told  
To move their youthful sympathies for all  
Whom naked Penury and Winter cold  
Had thrown upon the world without a fold  
To herd them from the blast. Such was the tale  
The plighted lovers heard ; and as it rolled  
In measured numbers from his lips, the wail  
Of woe rung in their ears ;—they saw the vision pale :—

“ O'er the brow of dark Rowdon dim shadows fell fast,  
“ The voice of the Storm-Fiend awakened the blast ;  
“ The rain fell in torrents so bitterly cold,  
“ It froze as it swept over mountain and wold.

“ As the hoarse howling wind shook the woods with its  
    might,  
“ A cry long and harrowing startled grim Night,—  
“ 'T was the cry of a mother who yesterday smiled  
“ On affection's last treasure—her fatherless child.

“ From a cavern it echoed so dismal and chill,  
“ Where shepherds seek shelter when on the bleak hill ;  
“ But they were all hushed by the bright ingle-side,  
“ And felt not the pangs which the homeless betide.

“ Crouched down at her side was an age-stricken man,  
“ The widow's old father, blind, feeble, and wan ;

“ Driven out to the world from their dear mountain shed,  
“ All houseless and homeless to wander for bread.

“ Benumbed and benighted, they sought shelter there,  
“ Their hearts wrung with wretchedness, sorrow, and  
care ;

“ Death’s icy-cold hand pierced the young mother’s vest,  
“ And smote the sweet babe as it clung to her breast.

“ The hollow wind murmured a sad solemn prayer,  
“ Which mingled its wail with the widow’s despair ;  
“ The aged man held his lone child to his heart,  
“ Bade her take the dead infant and they would depart.

“ Dead ?—dead—cold and speechless ?—It cannot be so !  
“ She will rush out for help—but ah, whither to go ?  
“ Her poor broken heart, once so happy and free,  
“ Is bereft of its all Heavenly Father but Thee !

“ O, leave your warm ingles by mountain and moor,  
“ And seek the wild path to the bleak cavern floor ;  
“ Snatch the living from Death ere his shaft wings again,  
“ They are calling for aid which to-morrow were vain.

“ No footfall is heard, no voice answers near,  
“ In their dark hour of anguish to comfort and cheer ;  
“ From home, in bleak Winter, remorselessly driven,  
“ It is bitterest anguish where once it was heaven.

“ ‘ God guard you dear father, you ’ll soon be at rest,  
“ ‘ And we shall unite in the Lands of the Blest ;  
“ ‘ I go with my boy—’t is life’s dearest reward ;—  
“ ‘ Let us sleep with dear George in our village church-  
yard.’ ”

“ There is tempest without, and deep anguish within,  
“ A rushing of torrents, a wreck-howling din,  
“ The fobblings of sorrow, a struggle for breath  
“ A blessing—a prayer—the husht silence of death.

“ The morning beams brightly as no storm had been,  
“ But the shepherds returning behold a sad scene—  
“ A man old and blind moaning vacantly wild  
“ O’er the heart-nestled corse of a mother and child.”

Tempest—alone—woe’s wail—despair—and death,  
The blind old man—his daughter and her child :  
A hundred times, with close and bated breath,  
Remembrance haunts that scene so sad and wild,  
Though Spring hath come with rosy garlands piled,  
And billing birds have filled the merry woods  
With piping love, and Parson Frank hath smiled,  
Shook his white hair in laughter-loving moods,  
Pitied and blest the poor with all his worldly goods.

Hail early Summer! Welcome lulling day!  
The breath of flowers comes panting on the brow,  
Child-haunted meadows smell of new-mown hay,  
The blackbird sings upon the topmost bough;  
Old orchards in their fruitful beauty glow,  
The evening lark mounts goldening into song,  
While lusty laughter echoes down below  
Amid the ancient elms, where nightly throng  
The hamlet's sober seers in disputation strong.

## ERNEST.

Come, my sweet love—'t is tryft-hour by the chart,  
Twilight is stealing o'er the hills afar,  
And Hesper greets us from her evening car:  
Come with thy soul of joy. I'd be a part  
Of thy dear self; shrined in thy funny heart,—  
Made one and all-existent with my own,  
Since light, and life, and love are where thou art,  
O world of beauty in an arid zone.  
I was alone upon Life's furling sea,  
When like a beaoning star thou beam'dst upon  
My drifting soul, which now doth cling to thee  
For all its hopes and joys. Come gentle one;  
Night's silvan Sappho charms her secret bower,  
It needs but thee to bless this peaceful hour.

JESSIE.

But me, dear Ernest? You have waited long;  
I read it in your eyes, but not your heart:  
The shortest moment seems a heavy hour  
When our soul's mate is tardy, and we come  
Brim full of treasures from the lap of Love.  
Here let me greet you with these simple flowers—  
But now the guardians of our mothers' graves.

ERNEST.

Our mothers' graves? O, from our mothers' graves?  
Then have you been to Memory's hallowed shrine,  
And now returned to share its gifts with me:  
And from our mothers' graves!

JESSIE.

Your honoured friend,  
Your more than father, worthy Parson Frank,  
Came to our cot to-day, and tarried long.  
He loves to sit within the cozy porch,  
And listen to the glorious deeds of war:  
And where's the soldier does not love to fight  
His battles o'er again, and feel the hero still?  
You will not be a soldier, Ernest? No:  
Be anything becomes an honest man,  
But not a soldier—'t was my mother's woe.

The stream of strife and victory flowed on ;  
The hours passed swiftly by ; the curfew rung ;  
The gossips parted with—Good evening friend,  
And slowly from our little garden gate  
My father sauntered musingly, and all  
Alone. Yet few the moments : 'T is not long  
I've known a father, and it is not oft  
I'm absent from his side. He took my hand :—  
“ We'll to thy mother's grave, my child,” he said ;  
“ But now I've fought my country's foes again,  
“ And 't is the day they tore me from my home,  
“ Thy mother's arms and thy unconscious heart.  
“ Thou wast a tiny, blue-eyed prattler then ;—  
“ A daisy glinting from a world of flowers ;  
“ A new-born star filling two kindred spheres  
“ With heavenly light, till o'er their little joys  
“ The pall of sorrow fell and left them dark,  
“ Life-fevered on the threshold of their love.  
“ It is a calm and quiet hour ; there's peace  
“ I th' balmy wind.—We'll to her grave my child.”  
And as we walkt he pictured all the scenes  
Of youth, and how he won my mother's love ;  
And in the fulness of his widowed heart  
He knelt beside the ashes of the dead,  
And with a deep calm voice did pray for peace  
To her departed soul till we should all  
Unite in everlasting joy.—I pluckt  
Some daisies from the hallowed turf, then knelt

Me at the grave where your dear parents sleep  
And gathered more ; and as I wandered here,  
I bound them all about with threads of love,  
And to your care I give them, dearest heart ;  
Can you forgive my tardy coming now ?

ERNEST.

Even as you will my seeming haste. I did  
But wish you with me here. O, to have guessed  
The cause of your late coming—I had blest  
The tardy hour. Flowers from our mothers' graves !  
The unity of those dear names with these  
Love-fought memorials makes doubly dear  
The heart-presented gift. At this time too !

JESSIE.

At this time, Ernest ?

ERNEST.

Ay, this special time.  
There is an undiscovered Power that moves  
Us unto acts which erst ne'er stayed our thoughts.  
We chat of some dear distant friend, when lo !  
In mortal guise they shake us by the hand.  
'T is an old proverb, and 't is something more.

But now, while through the Evening-curtained Dale  
The wonted curfew tolled the hour of peace,  
My soul took cognizance of all the past ;—  
My boyhood's orphanage, my youthful hopes,  
What I have been, and what I am, and what  
There is in store. Sunny was every scene  
Till that sad hour when trembling all alone  
I stood upon the earth. Then came the voice  
Of Heaven-born Charity—my father's good  
Old master blessing me with heart and home.  
For that large love he bears to fellow men  
May the Eternal mete him blifs in heaven.  
The curfew ceased and Silence led my soul  
Communing to the grave where you did weave  
Sweet thoughts of me, and where your gentle hand  
Even pluckt these flowers. Yea, by your very words  
We both have worshipped there and knew it not,  
Though at the self-same moment ;—you in form,  
In spirit I. Your love allured you there,  
But why to-night ? This something 't is that takes  
Us by the skirts and whispers to the sense :—  
“ There's a mysterious chord links soul to soul,  
“ And stretching to the earth's far verge, mingles  
“ Our sympathies and, in a way unknown,  
“ Moves kindred minds to acts coincident.”  
I'll not dispute the cause so you have brought  
The precious offering. And I will prize  
It fondly, with the love that prompted all ;



The night, the scene, the silver-throated breeze,  
And your last words shall haunt my memory  
When time and distance have removed me hence,  
Amid the mazy moilers of the world.

JESSIE.

Removed you hence? What, leave dear Langley Dale,  
Its birds and meadows, peasant-homes and hearts,  
Its runnels of sweet melody and love,  
And rob your Jessie of her youthful bliss?  
Are we not happy?

ERNEST.

Happy, sweet one, yes!  
But duty to myself, and more, to you,  
And to that good, great-hearted man who loves  
Me as his own, and all the gentle ones  
Who cling about him with their precious joys—  
All these, and more than these, now boldly knock  
Against my heart and tell me,—if the fire  
Of noble self-dependence kindles there,  
I must be up and doing.—I have won  
Your love—your first and only love;—I'll win  
Your hand dear Jessie too!—A few rude years,  
And by the aid of firm Resolve, a true  
And trusty will, I hope to be a man.

You would not have me, adolescent grown,  
An aimless unconcerned dependant ?

JESSIE.

No.

ERNEST.

Then be not sad. The living Babylon  
Has room enough for all who strive, and in  
The striving seek till they have found. That goal  
Is mine some few days hence ; and I had told  
You my resolve ere now, but could not pain  
Your gentle heart so soon. You will consent !

JESSIE.

Ay, as the lamb torn bleating from its dam :  
I fain could bid you linger yet awhile,  
Pursue some object here, and 'twixt high aim  
And toil, find cheering smiles and that repose  
The arduous student craves so wearily.  
'Tis a rude world : And yet 't were best to go.  
You 'll not go far ?—Ah, wherefore go at all ?

## ERNEST.

What ! fit with longing lips beneath the vine,  
While other hands pluck ropes of ruddy fruit.  
Sweet one I go : And with thy aiding love,  
A purpose strong, and future bliss in view—  
Time shall not brand Defeated on my brow.  
'T will not be very long. And as I strive  
Amid the eager throng, Excelsior  
My inner faith shall be ; inspiring Hope  
Shall picture happy days to come, a home  
Amid our native dells, a quiet nook  
Of trees and flowers, an ever-babbling rill,  
The light of marriage-mated love, the earth,  
The cheerful fun, the melody of birds,  
Deep hazle lanes,—the tawny gypsy's haunt,  
Corn-kirtled uplands, clover-crested leas,  
The village and its church, where joyfully  
We lifted up our infant praise to heaven—  
A blessed little Eden, speaking peace  
Through gloom and gladness to the worlds of Light.  
Lo ! Night's fair queen unmantles all her beauty,  
And hosts of minstrel stars are in her train,  
Harping sweet music to the Silent Hours.  
The breeze disporting with thy unkempt hair  
Comes like the breath of angels ; gentle Jesus,  
There's harmony in every sound, and peace,  
In every soul.

JESSIE.

O, let me hear again  
The burden of that happy lay shall bring  
My wandering spirit back in trustful hope  
To the dear ark where all its treasures dwell.  
You know the song I love so well—the first  
You wooed me with.

ERNEST.

I do remember it  
As 'twere this very hour. (*Sings.*)

'T was evening in the summer-time,  
When hedges hung with May,  
And woods and welkin rung again  
With many a pleasant lay ;  
I wandered o'er the bonny braes,  
And through the golden corn,  
And saw a maiden sit i' th' sun  
Beneath a snowy thorn.

She was so fair to look upon,  
No fairer have I known  
Of all the bright and beautiful  
On whom the sun hath shone ;

Her smile was like a morning beam,  
Her voice was like a brook  
That sings its dimpling melodies  
Along the mazy nook.

Methought it was an angel-world,  
The birds sang sweeter far,  
There was a pearl in every flower,  
A heaven in every star ;  
Peace through the Shades of Silence walkt,  
Yet left me not alone,  
For I had found my soul's delight,  
And wooed her for my own.

And all the love could ne'er be told  
By silver-luting June  
Which murmured near that shady thorn  
For many a welcome moon :  
Bright summer went and came again,  
O'er dale and mountain wide,  
To smile with cheerful beams upon  
My Cottage and my Bride.

JESSIE.

'T is the untutored wooing of a heart  
As trustful as your own. Do all lands breathe  
The same emotions ; sing their plighting vows

In happy melodies across the leas ;  
Entwining pastoral scenes with rural love  
In simplest numbers, warbling of the woods,  
And dales, and dells, and laughter-gushing brooks,  
Filling our being with a living joy  
Which ever tunes the throbbing strings of life ?

## ERNEST.

As in our native Dale it echoes else  
Where love hath beating hearts to woo and win.  
All human hopes, all pure and social joys, [Heaven !  
Spring from one fount whose source is bounteous  
And whose eternal streams through Nature flow  
To all the thirsty isles—watering the vales,  
The arid fields, the tamed and pathless wolds ;  
Clothing the barren hills with quickening dews,  
Till flowers, and fruits, and youth, and beauty burst  
To lusty life, and hearts, and homes are glad  
With hope, and peace, and love emotional.  
But little of the great world's deeds I know,  
Much less have seen ; yet this I know, dear heart ;  
It is not always love that weds ; too oft  
'T is youth and beauty bartered to old age ;—  
An outward pageant trigged for glittering show  
To mock the life-long sacrifice within.  
Such is the mode and fashion of the times ;  
And more in this our day than in the days

Of Eld when love was married unto love,  
And not untitled lands to bankrupt names ;  
When Mammon sent no victims to the shrines  
Where plighted troth its sacred compact seals  
I' th' fight of man and sanctuary of God.  
O, there are sweet love-lays in every land,  
Each breathing of its native home and soil—  
This as the flowers that perfume the Fair South,  
This as the winds that wanton o'er the hills :  
And here, and there, and everywhere on earth,  
The husbandman who tills his master's fields,  
Plodding in rugged hopefulness—his poor  
And homely cottage ringing with the laugh  
Of rosy girls and boys, tastes more of bliss  
Than half the rulers of the world.

JESSIE.

Then would

I be what now I am. O, let content  
Go with you wheresoe'er you go. And now  
We'll to our happy homes. My father waits  
My coming at our cottage door ; and see,  
The weary villagers go up to rest ;  
Through the all silent trees, like glistening stars,  
Their little casement's gleam ; and 't is the hour  
Of evening prayer : Good Parson Frank  
Awaits his little household.

ERNEST.

Even so,  
And I obey. But now I feel the lessening hours  
Enchain me with their ever-beating spells.  
Fain could I stay and tell you all my heart,  
Ending the full confession with—Adieu;  
And when your voice no longer cheers my soul,  
Catch the last wave of these entwining hands,  
And hoping, trusting in our plighted troth,  
Leave Langley Dale and all its loves behind.

JESSIE.

Words do but faintly breathe the soul's strong faith,  
And truth is in our deeds that speak untongued;  
Yet, if the yearnings of a simple maid  
Could give you passport to your spirit's aim,  
How would I vigil with unwearied soul:  
Good night.

ERNEST.

Stay Jessie; give me yet your ear.  
The moon will scarce have journeyed ere the bells  
Ring out their lustiest peal to usher in  
A marriage morn. To-morrow makes a bride  
The youngest daughter of the Rector's heart.



How merrily the happy birds will sing,  
How rustic eyes will glow and strong hearts blest  
The gentle maid. You know her virtues well :  
No brother had she for her sister-love,  
No sister I to lean upon my own ;  
She gave the unapportioned prize to me,  
And like her own sweet self, she has befought  
This early day that I may share her full  
Delight. And you will share it too, dear heart :  
Go, dream upon 't—awake at dawn—look blithe  
And beautiful as when our young May-Queen,  
And as the sun doth kiss the laughing hills  
We 'll hie us to the bridal.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sweet heaven ! The murmurings of two young hearts  
Have ceased, and Silence like an angel treads  
The drowsy halls of Night. Nor man alone  
Lays down his jaded strength ; the sweet charm runs  
Through boundless life and all the flowers that shone  
So golden by the shimmering brook at Noon,  
Have closed their halo-fringed eyes to dream  
Of bright To-morrow ; while the gentle moon  
Sings her soft vigil to the answering stream,  
And drowsy cattle in the willow meads,  
Or by the homestead lounge. Comes the soft low  
Of bleating kine, wild notes among the reeds,

The deep-toned music of the stormy pine—  
Great psalmist of the forest, and the flow  
Of rural resonance—such peace is thine  
Young Saxon pilgrim ; wilt thou still resign  
It, with thy happy home, and plighted one,  
To launch upon Life's furling sea alone ?  
Ay, linger yet awhile and look around  
Thee. How the warm pulse throbs as with quick eye  
He scans the dewy meadows to espy  
The latest glimpse of his sweet love. Nor sound,  
Nor sight absorbs the soul but shall be made  
A part of this life-hour when other scenes,  
And crowds and forms of loveliness parade  
The City streets, with every art that weans  
Us from the sunny memories of the Past.  
Yet not for aye. We tread the world's highways,  
And in the multitudinous hubbub cast  
Full many a shoulder-glance to those bright days  
We fain would live again and be the child  
On whose young hours sweet Love and Nature smiled.

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WEDDING - BELLS.

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LIKE a fair lily at awakening morn  
She smiles, while chime the merry wedding-bells  
Which fill her snowy bosom with the spells  
Of that sweet joy which was of Eden born.  
Maidens are hastening through the laughing corn  
To give full welcomes to the blushing bride,  
And him, her chosen one, her future guide  
Through all life's ways—the happy or forlorn.  
Come love's Evangel, blest with kindred prayers,  
And warmest gratitude of lowly hearts ;  
'T will soothe thee in thy little world of cares,  
Which time shall hallow with its fondest arts :  
Nature hath put her marriage garments on,  
And gives thee bridal greeting lovely one.

ERNEST. (*Passing a Cottage*).

A blythe good-morrow, Widow Ware,  
What, stirring at early dawn?  
In prim-lace cap and boddice too,  
As in the days ago!  
You're going to grace the green to-day,  
To join the wedding glee;  
'Shrew not my prying, get your staff  
And jog along with me.

WIDOW.

You've pryed right seemly Ernest, boy,—  
If life and strength betide,  
Belike I'll join the happy band,  
And bless the bonny bride.  
God guide her 'long her coming path  
For all the young bright years  
She's spent in doing daily good,  
With smiles for haughty sneers.  
Since Age and Care have borne me down  
She's been a friend to me;  
'T will be my last—I'll get my staff  
And up the Dale wi' thee;  
I'll put my best foot first, my son,  
And hurtle up wi' thee.  
You'll lose the blessed sister-love  
Of many a happy year:—

ERNEST.

A precious friend, a true, sweet friend,  
A friend for ever dear.

WIDOW.

I would from England's prideful halls  
Her daughters might descend  
And see this day what 't is to be  
The simple peasant's friend.  
Bless the dear soul—I'd surely starved  
But for her angel-hand ;  
Starved in the midst of plenty, boy,  
Starved through that devil's brand—

ERNEST.

Nay, hold good Widow, prythe hold.

WIDOW.

And wherefore hold?—Yet list,  
Listen though stones had ears and tongues,  
And every daisy hilt :  
My mother nursed an Avondell,  
First learned his feet to walk,

First shewed him what was right and wrong,  
First ruled his tongue to talk :  
And Manhood came—he knew her not,  
Frowned on his faithful nurse,  
Passed heedless by the pauper's grave,  
And died—her daughter's curse.  
The raven croaks on the castle tower,  
The screech owl haunts the keep,  
The sweet robin seeks the peasant's grave,  
And sings his mate to sleep.  
Die the foul deed—

ERNEST.

Nay, let me hear  
From thee that bitter tale  
Crooned o'er at many an ingle-side  
With Winter's stormy wail.

WIDOW.

Bitter indeed :—In yonder cot  
I've lived for forty years ;  
And woe began with want, my son,  
And grief with widow's tears.  
Starvation swept our country side,  
The spectre, grim and pale,

Hunted its famisht victims down  
By mountain, wood, and vale :  
With want and misery how they died !  
But while men barked for bread,  
Their master's dogs were at his door,  
Both better housed and fed.  
One Winter's night—dark unked hour,  
Goaded to hunger-wrong,  
Some twenty hapless villagers  
Foregathered in a throng ;  
And through the woods of Avondell  
They prowled in search of food ;—  
And few returned to Langley Dale  
To tell the tale of blood.  
My gaffer, like a hunted dog,  
Fell by a fatal hand ;  
My poor boy fled I knew not where  
To shun the lord's fierce brand.  
O, there was many a wailing heart,  
And many a wretched home ;  
He swore he'd pull the village down,  
And hunt us to our doom.  
'T was like him and his hellish hate,  
Which nothing could appal ;  
He'd hang poor folk on every tree  
Like onions on a wall.  
But the lord sleeps in his marble tomb,  
The peasant in the wood,

Old Avondell in ruin lies  
With all its haughty brood.  
One only viper haunts the lair,—  
And for your dear life's sake,  
Fail not to guard the heart you love  
Against that gilded snake.  
Truth never dwelt in kith or kin,  
Contention was their mother,  
Kindred has warred with kindred blood,  
And brother murdered brother.

ERNEST.

Another warning?—surely Crime  
Wears a most motley face,  
While men can plot out wicked ends  
With such a seemly grace!

WIDOW.

Villany's weak where Love is strong;  
You have a heart—a hand!

ERNEST.

Ay truly, and in Virtue's need  
They shall not fail to brand.



A courtier, gallant, gartered knight,  
I' faith, I know not what !

WIDOW.

A spendthrift knight, a gartered rake,  
A gilded, sensual sot :  
Courtier indeed !—But let it pass ;  
We 'll talk of that no more.

ERNEST.

Poor Widow Ware : may Heaven still send  
Good angels to your door.

WIDOW.

Kind thanks my son, so let us cease  
This bygone tale of sorrow ;  
The day is bright, and we 'll be blythe  
Whate'er betide to-morrow.

ERNEST.

To-morrow will be the latest day  
That I may linger here ;—  
My home is hence the battle-world,  
With all its motley gear :

And many a friend I leave behind,  
With her my soul loves best,  
But Hope, the heart's sweet syren, sings—  
"To strive is to be blest."  
Give me your kindly benison,  
And I will o'er the lea;  
The merry bells call forth the bride,  
And Jessie waits for me.

WIDOW.

Success lies in a honest will,  
Keep that rare treasure bright;  
Truth be your guide, the world your friend,  
And heaven your steadfast light:  
My poor old glass has nearly run,  
Soon Time and I must part;  
God bless you for your parent's sake,  
And for your own good heart.

*(The Widow alone.)*

The raven croaks on the castle tower,  
The screech owl haunts the keep,  
The sweet robin seeks the peasant's grave  
And sings his mate to sleep;  
The wolf has fawned upon the lamb,  
The worm has scotched the flower,

The hawk is fluttering o'er his prey,  
And waits the guardless hour.

Forth flies a city's crowd like bees a-wing,  
All buzzing here and there, amazement led ;  
It might have been the nuptials of a king—  
So crused is every street ; and as they spread  
Broader and deeper, furling overhead,  
Lo, slipshod Gossip opens all her ears,  
And swells the murmur—"Mammon's to be wed !"  
But there is nothing earnest in the cheers,  
No hearty prayers went up, nor glisten joyful tears :

Whilst Alford's gentle maid comes forth to meet  
The chosen of her life, and welcome all  
The loving hearts and speaking eyes that greet  
Her on the threshold of her bliss, and call  
Her by that name so dear and loved withal.  
A mother's constant prayer goes with thee child,  
A father's blessing like sweet dew doth fall  
Upon thy throbbing heart, and Heaven hath smiled  
Upon thy angel deeds midst sorrow sad and wild.

O, she hath vigiled through the live-long night—  
On happy maiden-hood to look her last,  
Her pale brow haloed in the moon's soft light ;  
And as she gazed upon the eternal vast,  
The future shimmered into life and cast

Its hopes and cares about her, till the song  
Of latest Philomel with midnight past  
Away and Dawn awoke the minstrel throng  
To pipe their myriad melodies the whole day long.

And they are piping now ; while from the hills  
The merry breeze comes panting o'er the flowers,  
Or wantons by the lichen-braided rills ;  
The rooks sweep high above the hoary towers,  
Joy is on tiptoe, and the laughing Hours  
Take Labour by the hand and flaunt away,  
By lordless castles and through olden bowers,  
Till Alford, bustling as an hostel gay,  
Gives broad and lusty welcome to this holiday.

The swart-browed thresher stays his constant flail,  
The herdless cows are lowing down the stream,  
The milk-maid leaves her dairy and her pail,  
The hardy ploughman stalls his sturdy team ;  
And Langley Dale awakes as from a dream,  
While o'er the fields the village bells ring out  
A wildering lay, and Morn, with boundless beam,  
Shadows the brook where sports the spotted trout ;—  
There's revel in the broad-faced laughter of the lout.

And Parson Frank comes from his ancient door,  
The fair bride leaning on his arm.—What strong

Plebian shouts ring through the trees of yore,  
What silent blessings gush all hearts among,  
As with love-greeting eyes she speaks along  
The gathering crowd, and fain would press each hand  
Strewing her path with flowers, and join the song  
Of rural joy, by rustic beauty fanned,  
Such as ne'er fills the heart of any other land.

They love her for her virtues and her worth—  
Those precious amulets to maiden grace :  
For she is of the gentlest of the earth,  
And there quiescent beams in that sweet face  
A heavenly soul which ever lives to chafe  
The woe from Sorrow's heart. The great world's fame  
May know her not ; but Time will ne'er efface  
The household charm which clings about her name,  
And lights the lowliest ingle with its warmthful flame.

“ Go mother, bless the bonny bride for me,  
“ And take this garland, wove with feeble hand ;  
“ To-day a happy brides-maid I should be ;  
“ And so I shall—but in a heavenly land ;  
“ The bright flowers smile above me mother, and  
“ I soon shall wander there with Fred and Kate ;  
“ And you will come and join the blissful band !  
“ Go, bless the bride sweet mother ; she will wait  
“ My coming, and will think I linger long and late.

" Draw back the curtains, ope the window wide,  
 " And let the honey-suckles fan my brow ;  
 " Hark how the birds are welcoming the bride !  
 " I think they never sung so sweet as now :  
 " Lay me, dear mother, where the daisies grow,  
 " And do not weep since all are happy There ;  
 " Good Parson Frank has often told us so :  
 " Go, blest the bride, go, blest the happy pair,  
 " And while I linger here their joy shall be my prayer."

Yes, she will leave her dying one to lay  
 The bridal offering at the hallowed shrine ;  
 Devotion can no holier homage pay  
 Than this ; and O, it is most truly thine  
 Fair girl, with blessed words from lips divine  
 Which ere to-morrow may not blest again.  
 In after-time this simple gift shall shine  
 In life's dear record like the starry wain—  
 Tear gemmed and memory-wreathed where costlier gifts  
     were vain.

Full forty years ago—old Joseph says,  
 Young Parson Frank brought home his bonny bride ;  
 And Langley Dale has seen some stormy days  
 Simfyne ; yet now, with fond maternal pride,  
 The dame is happy by her daughter's side ;  
 While kindred hearts—young Ernest and his love,

The village fair, with neighbours far and wide,  
Join all the pompous pageant, and they move  
To merry music, tripping it through glebe and grove.

Gallant young yeomen hold their rendezvous  
With lusty glee around the "Good Intent,"  
Or lounge along the sacred avenue,  
All wreathed with garlands in wild beauty blent;  
Love-glancing eyes on blushing maids are bent,  
Heart beats to heart, smile answers "Yes" to smile;  
And in the gush of Joy's sweet rapture,  
They hail the bride, piping clear throats the while,  
Till rings the marriage song o'er many a mead and stile.

Linked hand in hand, thro' Morning's dewy shades,  
With dappled dells, and songful nooks between  
They lead the happy pair, with chosen maids  
To grace her plighting as 't were Beauty's queen:  
There's hearty greetings on the village green,  
Blessings and prophecies on many a tongue;  
The simple Saxon church in quaintly sheen  
Invites them to the altar-wreathed and hung  
With brightest garlands waving all the aisles among.

A virgin blush steals o'er her cheek; the throb  
Of sacred awe her bosom stirs as round  
She casts her timid eye and sees the robe  
Of Nature smiling at her feet, and bound

With such endearments, that even Pride ne'er found  
With all its tinsel pomp ; while by her side,  
And by heroic tombs, is heard the sound  
Of prayerful hope that care will ne'er betide  
While trustfully she leans upon her future guide.

O, there is something more in that great tie  
Which weds two hearts for ever than is made  
The jocund theme of half the world who fly  
To its enchantments : blazon with parade—  
'T is flimsy show, a pageant that will fade ;  
If purest love and virtue be not there,  
Sever the troth, and let its curse be stayed,  
Ere life is robbed of beauty and laid bare  
To all the bitter woes which faithless mortals share.

Blest is the love that dieth not, and blest  
The humblest home that smiles in love's embrace :  
The soul aweary with the world's unrest,  
Yearns for its happy hearth, and that dear face,  
And those sweet prattling tongues that ever chase  
Life's darkling clouds away.—Be such the love  
And such the home, where'er the dwelling-place,  
Ye trusting hearts who now stand forth to prove  
Your vow's devotedness before the throne above.

Peal out ye babbling bells, and let it fly  
O'er hill and dale to every heart and home ;



Sun-soaring skylark bear it up on high—  
Down from the plighting of their troth they come  
With hearty jubilation that tops the dome,  
And makes the jocund woods with gladness ring :  
Old Avondell shakes off its wonted gloom,  
The forest-haunting warblers fairly sing  
Their little hearts away with wildest welcoming.

Parental love yields up its household claim  
To him who wooed and won his bonny bride—  
Greeted by Friendship now with dearer name :  
O, there are sunny smiles on every side,  
And round the porch she fees with blushing pride  
A troupe of merry girls yelad in white,  
Flowers in their hands from many a cot supplied ;  
She takes the proffered gifts with sad delight,  
And hears with throbbing joy the song their hearts indite.

*(The Children Sing.)*

Gentle bride, O, gentle bride—  
Alford's joy and Alford's pride,  
Prayers and blessings go with thee  
Wherefoe'r thy home may be ;  
Be it far, or be it near,  
May sweet smiles its ingle cheer,  
Smiles like moonlight softly pale  
Mid the flowers in Langley Dale.

Gentle bride, O, gentle bride,  
Who will be the orphan's guide?  
Who will teach the poor man's child  
Holy truths with precepts mild?  
Who will be the widow's friend  
Cheering life unto its end?  
Who will lift to Sorrow's tale  
Like to thee in Langley Dale?

Gentle bride, O, gentle bride,  
Calmly as a waveless tide  
Flow the stream of wedded life—  
Daughter, sister, lover, wife;  
Hand in hand, and heart in heart,  
Striving for the better part;  
Thee and thine we gladly hail,  
Won and wed in Langley Dale.

Gentle bride, O, gentle bride,  
Love is waiting at thy side;  
Speed thee fair, and speed thee well,  
Peace around thy altar dwell;  
Life be one long happy day,  
As it beams and fades away;  
While the lark and nightingale  
Cheer the braes of Langley Dale.

---

Down in the shade of broad-browed elms  
Jolly old Dapple brews good ale,  
And it foams with a spirit that overwhelms  
The drouthiest bibber in all the Dale.

'T is the goldenmost time of the golden day,  
And Boniface stands in his door,  
All rubicund, smiling, and doffing to pay  
Obeisance due as the villagers pour  
From the church to the merrily bustling scene,  
On nuptial largesse heartily bent ;  
And Dapple's mine host, since the eyes of a queen  
Have looked on the lord of the " Good Intent."

Gather ye, gather ye, happy and hale,  
Gather ye stalwart and strong ;  
The tapster is broaching the brown wedding ale  
'Mid morrice and revel and song :  
Come from the valleys and bosky blue hills,  
Come all with a laugh and a leap—  
The maiden ye honour so lovingly wills  
That to-day her young bridal ye keep.

To be memory-loved is a right regal dower,  
God's light i' th' furrows of Time—  
It armours the soul, and it goldens the hour  
As up to the Endless we climb.

Young Laughter comes rollicking over the green,  
 And Joy is at leap-frog with Mirth ;  
 Love gambols with Youth, and in buxomest sheen  
 The Maid and the Matron come forth :  
 By the boles of old trees glance a group of bright eyes,  
 With fingers bewitchingly mocking ;  
 From the swift foot of Frolic the whizzing ball flies,  
 While Rompus is throwing the stocking :  
 In motley commotion they mingle and throng,  
 To catch every gambol by chance ;  
 Some thread Granny's needle, some chorus the song,  
 Some call for the pipe and the dance ;  
 With " Haste to the Wedding " they couple away,  
 Through hustle, and bustle, and laughter :  
 Then " Roger de Coverly " gallant and gay,  
 The " Haymakers " skeltering after.

And who could say nay ?—there's a charm in the glee  
 Which rouses the gaffer and dame ;  
 Age, Ague, and Harshdip come limping to see,  
 And itch for a hand in the game. [maid,  
 " One wedding makes more," says a full-blossomed  
 Says Dapple—" There's nothing so plain,"  
 And they link it beneath the old elm's spacious shade,  
 And Haste to the Wedding again.

" Long life to the bride," cries a merry old man,  
 Long life to the bride echoes round ;

And blessings flow hearty from pitcher and can,  
Where many a blessing is found.  
Sweet magic of Music, sweet music of Mirth,  
Ye gladden the gloomings of Sorrow ;  
The stars sung Creation's awaking to Earth,  
And Mirth sallied forth on the morrow :  
And now blythe and busky she laughs with the tide,  
Rekindles the smoldering fun,  
Till Revel sits down with a stitch in the side,  
And welcomes the westering fun.

Round the broad Saxon window that looks up the Dale  
A knot of old cronies are seated,  
Potationed with bickers of logical ale,  
With ditto and ditto repeated ;  
There 's Wisdom in highlows, sedate and sincere,  
Keen Law holding forth with hard knuckles,  
Stern Politics noting with visage severe,  
And Substance in broad shining buckles.

"Give laughter to lads, and your weddings to lasses,"  
Cries Politics, loudly and strong ;  
"Mid the circle of mirth and the brimming of glasses,  
"Let Right shake her thunders at Wrong :"  
"A wedding has bounds," says the Sage with a smile,  
Says Law—"They 'll be broken to-night,"—  
And they gather around all a-smirking the while,  
And put every "motion" to flight.

But the ale it flows fast, and the logic grows stronger,  
And many a point is debated,  
Till listening Reason will listen no longer,  
Nor Laughter by Logic be rated.  
For who would be learned on a bridal's bright eve ?  
Who measure out bliss by the yard ?—  
Not a murmur shall fall, not a sadness shall grieve,  
Nor the tenderest heart-string be jarred.

Sweet tales of the village, and legends of years,  
The loves, and the joys, and the sorrows ;  
Hopes budding in gladness, and buried in tears,  
Dark To-days bringing funny To-morrows ;—  
These come with the lay of the evening lark,  
And mellow the lessening mirth,  
Till whispering wooers stroll out in the dark,  
And make sweetest heaven of earth.

And let the fun cease as the sun goeth down,  
Let the cronies re-bottle their speeches ;  
While brave Andrew Bell, with a hero's renown,  
Re-forms the death-harrowing breaches.

Grouped round the old foldier, all silence and ears,  
Are faces of long, long ago ;  
The bright eye of youth, the deep furrow of years,  
The dame and her doughtable Jo :

And musterings, pipings, fond vows, and farewells,  
Long marchings, grim battle, and death—  
On these with the dash of a soldier he dwells,  
Nor bates even a jot or a breath  
Till the foe bites the dust, and the citadel falls,  
And the fierce foughten victory's won;  
And the flag of Old England waves high o'er the walls,  
Flashing out the brave deeds that are done.

---

And like the lullings of the drowsy sea,  
The marriage murmur floats away :  
Day sinks to gentle slumber till the laugh  
Of homeward mirth seems out of tune—  
So peaceful is the hour, so voiceless now  
That green glad corner of the earth.  
The panting song,  
The "Cup o' kindness yet for Auld Langsyne,"  
The grasping hand,  
The melting kiss of throbbing youth,  
The hearty, old "Good Night,"  
The blessings and the prayers—  
Have closed this happy day in joy and peace.  
Two hearts alone remain, entwining all their love  
Beneath the broad old tryfing-elm,  
Where Childhood gambolled and the Nightingale  
Doth carol her sweet sadness to the stars.  
And as the moon glints through the boughs

The bride becomes a child again ;  
And many a pleasant scene revives  
Within that olden bower.  
“ O let us live again the youthful past,  
For one sweet hour recall the dear old times  
Beginnt with little worlds of joy.  
Dear Edward, all is home and happiness with thee ;  
And I do lean upon thy love,  
And give my all to thy whole keeping ;  
For this the joybells rung so merrily,  
For this the gleemen sung so cheerily,  
For this a mother's and a father's prayer  
Is breathed for us to Heaven :  
I feel its holy influence like the breath  
Of early Summer wafting o'er the flowers.  
O, how I hope our future may be happy ;  
That these first moments of our wedded bliss  
May crown us one for ever ;  
That sweet Contentment's ruddy fruit  
May ripen round our home,  
Till mellow Age, with kindly hand,  
Shall gather the golden vintage in.”

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GOING AWAY.

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MORNING—fairest born of Light,  
Leaves the shades of dark-haired Night,  
Wakes the woods to clattering lays,  
Hails the sun upon the braes,  
And the rivers as they go  
Leaping, laughing merrily O ;  
Bids sweet Hope and Nature smile,  
Man and Moil to reconcile ;  
Calls the shepherd from his bed,  
And the ploughman to his steed ;  
Leads the thresher to the barn,  
And the cattle to the tarn ;  
Peeps the cottage window in,  
Ringing with its rosy din ;

Gathers dew from briar and rose  
Where the honeysuckle blows ;  
Welcomes Roger with his wain  
Swagging down the broad green lane—  
Where the market-mongers throng,  
Gadding all the road along ;  
Trips with Beauty to the rills  
Dancing down the dewy hills ;  
While the lark on pearly wings  
With the merry ploughboy sings :  
Through the meadow, croft, and dell,  
Over the uplands breezy swell—  
Kisses each flower and flaunts away  
Far in the blaze of busy day.

To the loved ones round the board  
Of Alford's gentle-hearted lord,  
Ernest bids a long Good-Bye ;  
Lingers still, yet reasons why !  
Duty prompts, the hour has come—  
Farewell loves, and farewell home ;  
All the world is full of joy  
Man is moulding from the boy  
Life is fair, the heart is strong,  
Feels no sorrow, fears no wrong ;  
Blessings cheer him from the door  
Where he came an orphan poor ;

Parson Frank and dear old dame,  
Daughters—sweetheart—every name,  
Oft he murmurs as he strays  
Down the olden shady ways ;  
Through the village, o'er the green—  
Shaking many a hand between ;  
Hears dear Jessie's sad farewell  
Throbbing like a lonely knell ;  
While the clicking cottage gate  
Echoes like the voice of Fate.  
To the church-yard last he steals,  
All his orphan love reveals ;  
Bows his heart and bows his head  
At the altar of the dead ;  
Plucks a daisy from the sod,  
Hopes in Truth and trusts in God ;  
Wipes the courting tears away—  
Leaps into the broad bright Day.  
Speed thee youth—the world's before ;  
Onward !—upward !—

And the door  
Of Life's young Spring hath closed for ever !  
Linger—it will open never.  
Gird thee for the distant hill,  
High and steep and steeper still ;  
Speed thee youth, nor look behind,  
Seek the Right and you shall find

What is life and what is fame,  
And dearer still—a honest name ;  
Take the Wrong, and every hour  
Chains you to a demon power ;  
Sweeps you to the maddening sea  
Of everlasting infamy.

Upland, meadow, wood and dell,  
Echo, echo—Fare-you-well ;  
Sweetest Alford no more seen ;  
Cot, nor croft, nor village-green ;  
Dale, and glittering spire are gone—  
In the battle-world—alone.

Thus we leave the parent ingle and go out to meet the  
    strife,  
On the highways, down the bye-ways, round the gusty  
    iffles of life ;  
Hopeful some, their path bespangled with the chivalry  
    of birth ;  
Others tolerated human—paupers to their Mother Earth.  
This went forth with blazing birthright—plunged, and  
    fell, and lost his road ;  
This had nothing but his nature—wrought it out and  
    stalwart stood ;  
This was fair as morning lily—blighted ere the sun  
    went down ;

This had purpose—all her fortune,—won and wears the  
woman's crown ;

This aspired to hero-trappings—donned the plume for  
conquests gay ;

This but fought a mother's blessing—grasped the falchion,  
cleaved his way ;

This went o'er the buoyant waters, prowling many a  
golden shore ;

This but hailed the land of promise, sunk at sea and  
was no more.

O, to rid me of this being, whines the aimless, pampered  
foul ;

Up and onward, cries the worker—dive, and delve, and  
touch the goal.

Spring laughs through the wooing meadows ; Childhood  
budding beauty weaves ;

Summer goldens all the harvest ; Manhood piles the lusty  
sheaves ;

Autumn heaps the empty garners ; Age enjoys the  
gathered bread ;

Winter sleeps in icy silence ; Death lays down the hoary  
head.

Our dear land so hero-storied—England, queenliest of  
the isles,

Leans upon her Saxon sceptre, crowned with love, and  
wreathed with smiles :

O, but she's a noble mother, parent of a valiant race ;  
Heaven defend her from dishonour in her highest, low-  
liest place.

Ay, the morn is oft remembered, and the hot and  
dusty day—

Leaving home and happy childhood for the wide world  
far away :

Still the green lane glints with daisies where we took  
the last sweet meal

A mother's kindly hand provided ; and we see that  
mother steal

Wistful to the garden wicket, waving still that kindly  
hand,

While we reach the human highway, thronged with  
many a motley band.

And the Exodus flows ever in a world of wandering  
streams—

Dasht with wild and stormy tempests, funned with  
basking summer dreams :

Every morning brings fond partings, every night pater-  
nal prayers ;

Victory's trump makes many a heart ache, Fame is  
wreathed with upas-cares ;

Gone the just yet gentle chidings, gone the kindred loves  
of home,

And thy voice devoted mother answers from its early  
tomb ;

Gone the strong hand's lusty pressure, gone the full heart's  
tearful joy,

But there clings about us ever—"Fare-ye-well, God  
bless you boy."

UNDER THE ELMS.

---

'T IS a songful, funny afternoon,  
Dear Earth is wreathed from the lap of June,  
The cuckoo wings with its happy tune  
Over the waving greenery ;  
The goodwives chat o'er their cozy tea,  
The haymakers laugh right lusty and free,  
While Evening, tripping o'er meadow and lea,  
Goldens the deepening scenery.

Bright children revel in merry bands,  
And run to the bosky sylvan lands,  
To chafe the bee and fill their hands  
Brimming right over with posies ;

Blue-bells bright as a maiden's eye,  
Violets peeping up wooingly,  
Woodbines flaunting the hedges so high,  
Whitest and wildest roses.

Stern rude life comes jaunty amain,  
Haunts the cool wood and the deep green lane—  
The world behind with its rush for gain,  
Beauty around for possessing ;  
Down in their little cottage bower,  
Now, at this songful sunny hour,  
Jessie, forlorn for her young heart's dower,  
Welcomes a father's caressing.

Andrew chats, his staff in his hand,  
Jessie smiles over her needle and band,  
Flowers by the grass-waving breezes are fanned,  
Melody rings from the bushes ;  
Hard by the wicket a proud step goes,  
Hard by the bower a proud head bows,  
A proud man's smile, with his thwarted vows,  
Crimsons the maiden with blushes.

'T is as though the gust of a whirlwind passed,  
With a beautiful rose bent down by the blast,  
While the old parent tree stands firm and fast,  
Shielding the nestling flower ;



Not every rose by its native rills,  
In manor, or market, escapes the rude ills  
Of the blast that blanches and blights and chills,  
Scathing its charms in an hour.

## ANDREW.

Nay child, droop not your head. I see it all,  
And I have feared it long—not you my child,  
I doubt not you, your duty, nor your love.  
God grant the son a better heart, a nobler life,  
A worthier death and memory—than his fire.  
O, there 's an ominous and ill-starred change  
Come over Langley Dale of late. And why?  
Since that fair day which gave you to my heart,  
The halls of Avondell have blazed and rung  
With boisterous merriment: Where bats and owls  
Have feasted through the long lone years, Revel  
Now holds wild court, with midnight orgies deep,  
As 't were the old dark days came back again.  
Our little village—happy once in rude  
And rustic peace, now peals with reckless mirth,  
Till faithful watch-dogs howl from dark to dawn,  
And break the wonted silence of the night.  
'T was a bright bringing in of rosy May;  
'T was a glad scene—the queening of my child;  
And I would fain not cloud so fair a sky.

JESSIE.

Then wherefore dearest father ? Let the lord  
Enjoy his own according to his heart :  
Large wealth, broad lands, and all our homes are his ;  
And let him use them as he wills—'t is power  
He holds by birth-right. But he can no more.  
He cannot make a shrinking bosom love ;  
He cannot win devotion with a fraud ;  
He cannot buy affection with a nod,  
And pension it with smiles !

ANDREW.

He can do all,  
And more, my child, and who shall say him nay ?  
There's little gear that money cannot get,  
And little trust a traitor cannot buy.  
Ah, every home is his : Good Fortune grant  
He may not filch the jewels they possess.  
I am an old man now, furrowed with years  
And battle-scars : These honours sternly won,  
The honest pride they bring, my Jessie's love  
And happiness, a quiet pilgrimage  
Towards the lands of Everlasting Light—  
I pray no care may dim. For 't is my all ;

And losing these !—I 'm like a wintered tree  
Bowing its naked shoulders to the blast.  
He seeks your love my child !

JESSIE.

And wins it not.

ANDREW.

He 'll wrench it from you.

JESSIE.

Never !

ANDREW.

Say you fo ?  
Canst brave an Avondell my child ?

JESSIE.

With pure and plighted virtue—nothing more.  
One heart, one love, are all that I possess,  
And these are yours, and his who kept them bright  
And hopeful for your coming. Happy me  
Can I but cheer you till the fun of life

Sets golden o'er the weary soldier's grave.  
Come then, dear father, trust your child to Heaven,  
Brood not o'er sorrows which may never come,  
And live, and hope for that no distant day  
When Ernest shall return and claim his own.

ANDREW.

The storm-cloud drops a pearl on every flower  
And floats away : Thus pass this threatening woe,  
While Love and Virtue cheer our little home  
And fill the measure of the soldier's joy.  
Flow on ye gushing rivers of the soul ;  
The lowering sky looks bright again. Enough  
Dear Jessie. Let the proud lord smile or frown,  
And let the wild carousal wilder rage ;  
Let gallants drink full bumpers to their host  
Till roof and rafter gibe the chorus out :

We'll be happy now and aye,  
In our little cot and bower ;  
Joyful meet the smiling day,  
Trust beyond the darkling hour.

JESSIE.

No darkling hours. (*Aside.* Alas how many cloud  
My anxious heart). Now smooth your troubled brow,

Recall some happy moments of the past,  
And be yourself again.—There's Parson Frank !  
Look at his genial face, all fun and peace :  
His coming, like the summer-time, brings joy  
And gladness everywhere.—He'll not pass by ;  
O no, he'll never pass us by. I'll go  
And meet him at the gate :—I hope 't is news !—  
A word—a flower—a leaf—I care not what ;  
'T will be a precious talisman.

ANDREW.

Medals

And memory—'t is a fighting day ; the first  
We smelt the powder—

PARSON FRANK.

Say you so ? Certes,

Then smell it once again, while Jefs and I  
Give willing ear to that triumphant roll  
Of victories which thrilled the nations heart ;

JESSIE.

And spilt a nation's blood, its precious blood ;  
Brought many a wife's and many a mother's woe.

## PARSON FRANK.

'T was ever thus, and bates no single jot.  
While armed powers are clashing foot to foot,  
The people lift their hands and cry—Alas!  
Seek every scrap of news with eager eyes;  
Take silence for defeat; cheer victories  
Not half achieved; and ever swell the tide  
Of that great agony which heaves and howls  
Like wrathful ocean to the stormy winds.  
War is the proudest destiny of man,  
The conquering hero cries; the prophet holds  
It frightful carnage—direst scourge of hell.  
I would not tolerate one hour of war  
For conquests sake;—nor yet a pandering peace  
For regal rogues to tilt at as they list.  
To arm your hosts, invade and subjugate  
The wildest haunt of man—is not the Right  
Of Justice, 't is the Might of vaunting Power;  
The force of Strength to conquer and command.  
And wherefore seek to grasp the hand of mail,  
Or hope for universal peace with half  
The nations ruled and governed by the Sword?  
Disarm the world—make every soul a saint—  
Give holiness for sin—let justice reign  
For sordid law—truth for diplomacy,  
And honesty for fraud—then welcome peace  
From every shore. If not, we hug the snake,

And make a playmate of the hungry wolf.  
But marshal up your brave invincibles,  
With all the glorious deeds which they have done.

## ANDREW.

That day the trumpets' rousing blast  
Called England's sons from homely toil,  
I little thought my lot was cast  
I' th' ranks of war with its deadly moil !

Tyranny stormed and stalked abroad,  
Threatening strife to a trusty foe,  
And Britain drew her lawful sword,  
The Right of such a threat to know.

We crossed the sea to the bristling shore.  
And mustered twenty thousand strong—  
Full of the sinew and soul of yore,  
Ready to brave the hordes of Wrong.

But Peace was piping her pastoral lute,  
And old men telling their social tales,  
And dark-haired maidens gathering fruit  
From clustering vines in balmy vales.

The tiller went with his team a-field,  
The herdsman lounged beneath the trees,

The village bells sweet music pealed,  
And Summer laught across the leas.

In daify dells glad children played,  
In orchard homes old matrons spun,  
The cattle plunged in the limped shade,  
The bees flahit golden in the sun.

Noon, panting like a weary steed,  
Lay listless by the breezy brook,  
Till Evening perfumed every mead,  
And merry birds carolled from every nook.

We piled our arms by a pleasant stream  
Which sung the lay of a thousand years,  
And saw the swarming helots gleam  
High on the hills with their flashing spears.

'T is greyest Dawn—our lines and squares  
Roll forth like waves of silvery sheen,  
The crier Vulture croaks and glares,  
And the trump of battle peals between.

The morning lark with early song  
Shakes Night's rich jewels from her wing,  
As stalwart columns throb along,  
And startled vales with war-notes ring.



And on, and on the life-tide flows,  
And up the twenty thousand go,  
And down rush avalanching foes  
To crush old England at a blow.

Charge—and may God defend the right,  
Charge—for the land of old renown,  
Charge—in the teeth of vauntful Might,  
Charge—the aggressor's minions down.

An awful pause o'er the war-host comes,  
And throbbing across the solemn deep—  
Hearts rush to hearts in their kindred homes,  
And pray dear Heaven their all to keep.

'T is but a moment!—now the flash  
Of bellowing guns and blazing steel,  
The slaughtering fire, the ferried crash,  
Making the great earth quake and reel.

Steady, unblenching, right onward they go,  
Sinewed with iron—and solid as rock ;—  
Heaves the firm phalanx right up to the foe,  
Havoc leaps into the whelming flock.

Terrible shot, and murderous shell,  
Gash out great lanes of rushing men,

And heaping corse grimly tell  
Of a tyrant grappled in his den.

On—and they gain the deadly height ;  
Hark ! to the bugle's rallying notes ;  
Lo, in the day's war-clouded light,  
Our conquering banner proudly floats.

And this the gain, and this the cost—  
Three thousand heroes in the dust,  
A raging, routed, rebel host,  
Flying like cattle from their trust.

The victory dear Land is ours,  
The virgin steel has cleft the strife ;  
And the stern old Saxon bulwark towers  
Above the rush and wreck of life.

---

Again comes throbbing through the gloom  
The tramp of charging cavalry,  
Like muffled knell of awful Doom  
Over the shades of revelry.

Cleaving the mist like a flash of light,  
Six hundred sabres sweep the vale,  
While crouching foemen, dim to sight,  
Conjure up spectres lightning-pale.

Hoſts from the heights peer down below,  
And ſee that valiant deſperate band  
Hew their grim paſſage through the foe—  
Daſhing, ſlaſhing ſplendidly grand.

One to a hundred full in the teeth,  
Buried their ſabres up to the hilt ;  
Rolls the death-torrenting ſtorm beneath,—  
Halt !—or each drop of brave blood will be ſpilt !

'T is cloſed like midnight round the moon,  
With ſwarthes of ſlain to mark the track ;  
Courage—'t was but a cloud at noon—  
See how they cut their life-way back !

Through flanks of dragoonading flame  
A dripping remnant hold their way,  
Giving a wreath to Britiſh Fame  
Which makes the ſtrong heart leap to-day.

But who ſhall wear the honour won ?  
And who ſhall tell the tale at home ?  
Who ſay he ſet the heroes on ?  
Who face the wrathful ſtorm to come !

Six hundred braves torn all to ſhreds,  
For what ?—no living ſoul can tell :—

Gather the dead from their bloody beds,  
Bury them where they fought and fell.

---

'T was on November-morn the fifth,  
When horse and foot went ferried forth,  
The still defiant glaive to lift  
Of him who menaced half the earth.

A mighty host still stood at bay,—  
Our foemen four for every one :—  
We met them at the break of day,  
And conquered with the setting sun.

Cannon, and sword, and musketry  
Waged in the battle's awful brunt ;  
S'death—'t was a glorious fight to see  
The rearest rushing to the front !

Vain all the vaunts of blatant Power,  
Vain imprecations, desperate deeds—  
We swept down acres by the hour,  
Like swamps of towering Autumn reeds.

Cressly of old, nor Agincourt,  
Famed Marathon, nor Salamis ;—

No field of yesterday or yore,  
Could boast of braver deeds than this.

---

And then that lull, that famine-wreath,  
That winter gaunt with hideous woe,  
That nakedness and gorgon death,  
Whose grimest horrors none can know.

Look, Perfidy and all thy Slaves,  
The heroes go by thousands down,  
Down to their unrecorded graves,  
Stript of their glory and renown.

Gaze on each litter shuddering by—  
The dying with the ghastly dead;  
Harken to that unanswered cry—  
“Cover our nakedness, give us bread.”

See how they rot in oozy mire—  
Hearts in dear England, eyes to Heaven!  
Quenched the bright flame of that desire  
Which gallant deeds but now had given.

O God, they starve and freeze in swarms,  
With food and raiment piled around;

Through long lone months of bitter storms,  
No shelter but the naked ground.

They fall before the Scourger's breath,  
Each corse Routine's anathema;  
Every vale is choked with death,  
And every hill a Golgotha.

Yet Valour scatters the gathered clouds;  
The bated tyrant sheathes his steel;  
From shattered hofts and hero-shrouds  
The trumpet-notes of triumph peal.

PARSON FRANK.

Have all these horrors reached thy charnel-house  
Since God's great mercy struck thee straightway down  
I' th' face of all the tyrants of the world—  
Thou sceptred dust, thou poor imperial worm?

Let the stormful battle-fwell,  
Let the slaughter, deadly fell,  
Let our weeping households tell,  
All the deeds of thy red hand.

Let the prayers for heroes dead,  
Let the tears for heroes shed,

Let the curses on thy head,  
Stay the reigning Ruler's brand.

Peace to the brave who sleep beside their deeds,  
Hallowed their names, their memories ever green,  
With all the champions of Light, and Truth,  
And God's great Liberty to freeborn man !  
Age has long laid his hand upon my brow,  
Yet aye the heart beats warm and willing still ;  
And I did wish these old limbs lithe again  
To aid thee in the universal cause.  
Green be the turf that wraps the soldier's clay,  
And Heaven the bourne that welcomes him to rest ;  
And may Oppression's loss be Freedom's gain,  
And Happiness shake hands with all the world.  
We yet may live to see that broad bright day  
When Peace shall harvest the red fields of War ;  
When this fair Earth shall rise again as fresh  
And free, as pure and beautiful as God  
Did give it to our first-created fire.

And now my child, what news of thee and thine ?  
When smiled the man of letters on thee last ?—  
That rural monarch, bearing in his hand  
The hopes and fears, the sorrows and the joys  
Of all the subjects in his wide domain !  
How quick eyes brighten, and how young hearts throb,  
When up the Dale and o'er the green he stumps

Along, braving all weathers lustily.  
When lifted he the old latch last and gave  
Thee happy tidings ?

JESSIE.

'T is the joy my heart  
Now fought of thee. I thought I read good news  
In thy dear face, and saw its purport there !  
'T were precious new, O, very precious now ;  
Precious as love, and life, and that great world  
Which holds the sovereign jewel of my heart.  
For him, our morning friend, he long as read  
My asking eyes, and having only—No,  
For pity's sake he goes another way :  
And this is more than higher heads will do.

PARSON FRANK.

Than higher heads will do ?

ANDREW.

Ay, higher heads !  
Much higher heads ; with aims as base as hell.



PARSON FRANK.

What barbed heart could wound so sweet a life ?  
What hand so rash as pluck a gentle flower  
From out the sheltering bosom where the winds  
Of love blow ever soft and tenderly ?

JESSIE.

Nor heart, nor hand, nor power good Parson Frank :  
'T is but a passing cloud which hides the sun,  
And shrouds us with a momentary gloom.  
'T is gone. Now tell me all I'm fain to know.

PARSON FRANK.

In truth, as yet no word has reached our ears :  
But patience child ; the expected ever come,  
And greet us often as the wicket goes.  
And Ernest is a good and faithful son,  
Of noble nature, and whate'er the path  
Marked out for him, he'll walk along it straight,  
And bravely toil the sternest mission out.  
His generous heart, his manly love for truth,  
His trust in God, and hope in man, have made  
Him kindred with our own.

JESSIE.

O, is he not  
As precious as your own ? But while I ask  
The father speaks in thee, thou best of men,  
Thou dearest kindest friend. Forgive me then  
This eager hastiness ; but—

PARSON FRANK.

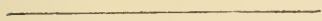
I know 't will come ;  
Joy speed it on the way. Pillow thy heart  
On Hope's calm bosom till some sunny hour  
Shall bring thee all thy longing love desires.  
The day is waning and the sun goes down  
Behind the purple woods : Silence and Peace,  
On tip-toe, steal across the lulling world,  
And weary Nature bows her head in prayer.  
I'll to the parsonage and that repose  
Which makes the humblest home a paradise.  
O Thou the universal Giver, blest  
Us with the fulness of thy love and smile  
Upon our doings. For we live but in  
Thy great beneficence ; and 't is Thy care  
Which keeps us day by day. To Thee we bow,  
Our God and Father now and evermore.

ANDREW.

Amen.

JESSIE.

Amen, amen.



BABYLON.

---

FAR up the leas like a happy child,  
A rivulet peeps from its cradle so wild ;  
'Trips through the meadows and sings thro' the groves,  
And kisses the flowers as it revels and roves ;  
The summer winds play with its wavy tresses,  
And Morning and Evening return its caresses ;  
And lightly it hies and distant it strays  
By hamlet, old croft, and deep murmuring maze.  
A merry boy eyes the young joy with delight,  
And launches his boat on its bosom so bright ;  
Nor dreams that the fleets of all nations shall ride  
Where his tiny bark floats out its moment of pride.  
Threading the vale like a heavenly beam,  
The lea-cradled rivulet laughs to a stream ;

And broader, and bolder, and brighter it flows,  
As down to the deeps of the ocean it goes.  
Ambition and Manhood come treasured and strong,  
To delve where the river sweeps stately along—  
A dark rolling flood, with old minstrel trees  
Harping the lays of the wantoning breeze.  
Dear scenes, and ye haunts of ancestral lore,  
You will echo with Nature's wild gladness no more ;  
The voice of the Spoiler is heard in your bowers,  
And the plough-share is crushing the homes of the flowers.  
Silence and Solitude wander away,  
Lingering, looking, and longing to stay ;  
Love twines a last wreath from the giant oak  
Ere he yields his great heart to the fatal stroke ;  
And the cottager leaves the last croft with a tear  
As the war-strokes of Havoc ring sad in his ear.

The axe to the forest—the wall to the ground—  
The fort to the upland—the fosse to the mound—  
The dock to the river—the port to the shore—  
The ship to the ocean—the helm to the oar—  
The mart to the meadow—the street to the lane—  
The arch to the chasm—the bridge to the plain—  
The citadel, temple—the palace and throne—  
The city of cities—a kingdom alone.

As toils the bee from flower to flower,  
The Years toil on from hour to hour.

Time and ages roll along,  
And pregnant generations throng  
The swarming marts of men. The grafts  
Seemed growing yesterday where thousands pass,  
And pageants sweep through Lud and Cheap to-day—  
Cheered by the May-pole and the morrice gay.  
Now rippling Fleet joins merry-voiced Old Bourne,  
And Thames is gladdened from sweet Clerken's urn—  
Whence famous knights of Palestine  
Go forth to win the Holy Shrine :  
Long may they keep the hoary gate  
Which holds their ancient name and state.  
Over Saint Giles the sky-lark sings,  
And the wind-mill flaps its breezy wings ;  
Burnhill a lusty harvest yields,  
And gleaners glean in Lincoln Fields ;  
Citizens guard the city walls,  
And loungers throng round old Saint Pauls ;  
While hunting band and courtly train  
Gladden Old Bow and Drury Lane.

Live in the everlasting page  
The glory of England's every age ;  
The great God-light and the Spirit-fire  
Which lit the deep Dark and scattered the Pyre :  
Live the old haunt and the sacred shade  
Where the bones of our crownless kings are laid—

The prophets immortal of Mind and Light,  
Who starred the dome of Reason's night :  
Live every deed and every name  
To halo the hallowed Halls of Fame.  
Live glorious Seer of Saxon Song,  
The Tabard gay, and the pilgrim throng ;  
The glittering coach and the pageant meet,  
The quaintly house and nodding street ;  
The terrace-court, the gothic hall,  
The creaking-sign, the pent-house wall,  
The citadel stern, the girdling fosse,  
The pulpit by the ancient cross ;  
The hoary Bar and the ponderous Gate  
That mark the bounds of regal state ;  
The barbed war-hoofs which invoke  
The king in haughty Bolingbroke ;  
The morrifiers gay in their full array,  
The gossiping nook and the shady way ;  
Beauty the rarest and gallants in gold,  
The scrivener lean and the yeoman bold ;  
The jousting green and the hostel snug—  
Where Eloquence beams from a big-bellied jug ;  
The jolly old knight and his roistering pack,  
Burly with feasting and rosy with sack ;  
The citizen free, and the 'Prentice band ;—  
The name and fame of our Fatherland.

Cycles of years and centuries roll,  
And nations evolve from pole to pole ;  
Time sweeps across the untrodden lands ;  
Ambition goes forth with her myriad hands ;  
Power rears the stern battlement, mans the strong fleet,  
Wealth pours out vast riches through market and street ;  
Art revels in beauty ; and Science dives deep  
Where regions of treasure all fathomless sleep ;  
And Glory and Commerce go stalwartly forth,  
To conquer and traffic the ends of the earth.

Restless, myriad-moiling din,  
Rolling out and throbbing in ;  
Day and Night, for ever and aye,  
Roaring, rushing every way :  
Life, and Death, and Weal, and Woe,  
Over, and on, and eager they go ;—  
Over and on, and ever,  
Like a stormful, surging river.  
Thousands and millions lavishly fed,  
Thousands and millions starving for bread ;  
Boisterous bubble and sweltering work,  
Brooklets of pleasure and oceans of mirk ;  
Sunny they glide and sudden they crash,  
The golden prow o'er the shuddering plash.  
A morning of beauty, a noontide of blight,  
Pale Misery shivering across the cold night ;



Bright little Edens of jubilant life,  
Myriadom reeking with pestilent strife ;  
Charity doling with half-aided hands,  
Villainy plotting in motliest bands ;—  
Ever and on, and crushing away,  
Bartering, bantering, night and day.  
Dragged from the gutter, a bundle of rags,  
A miser, with pelf-gripping hand on his bags ;  
The first on the 'Change, the last at the Mart,—  
Huge Mammon, with bargains of vice at his heart ;  
Launched on the world with a blinding show—  
Dabbled and dared—and what is he now ?  
A felon in gyves for breach of fair trust—  
The poor man's life and the rich man's dust.  
Life, and body, and soul on the rack,  
Moments are millions, there 's no looking back ;  
Over, and on, and breathless they go,  
Sweeps the proud pageant and rattles the show.  
The banqueting prince of to-day,  
Herds down with the beggar to-morrow,  
And the maiden, now merry as May,  
Yields beauty and virtue to sorrow.  
Bright in the hall, and dark in the den,  
The daughter of Nature and sister of men,  
Gilding the park and sweeping the shade,  
Flaunting her charms on the gayest parade ;  
Down the dark street at midnight she steals,  
A fire in her brain, and a fiend at her heels ;

Frenzied one stop !—there 's a hell in your path !—  
She crosses the threshold, defying its wrath :  
Love and sweet friendship bought and sold,  
Choked the pure fountains of life for gold ;  
Tossed in the bubbles and surged in the weeds,  
Scorned by the creedless, and doomed by the Creeds ;  
Lip-steeped in pleasure, and lounging at ease,  
Yawning for something, yet nothing will please ;  
Over, and on, and whirling away,  
Curfing and praying as hard as they may.  
Through the vast myriadom rushes the cry—  
“Famine and Pestilence ravaging by !”  
Terrors of hell ! how they hurtle and squall,  
As Death lays a threatening hand on them all !  
Compassion sweeps out of the woe,  
Yet pities poor beggarly men ;  
While thousands are chained to the foe,  
And die in his horrible den :  
The braggart flinks into his corner,  
The harlot howls off to her hole,  
The drunkard besots, and the scorner  
Hugs impotent Chance to his soul.  
Life, and Death, and Weal and Woe,  
Dazzling blaze and gilded show ;  
Heads in the air, and hands in the dirt,  
A pennyless heart and a gold-buttoned shirt :  
On, and over, and ever,  
A-down the Eternal River.—

Fathers on whom delight never smiled ;  
Mothers bewailing a wandering child ;  
Brothers agaunt in their starving lair ;  
Sisters, as Eden once blisful and fair,  
Crawling by stealth to a human fly,  
To tear their famisht hearts and die.  
Up from the leas where the Junes are bright,  
Filling the crofts with their full delight ;  
Out in the streets, and the wild wild rain ;  
A-bed on the steps in the dreary lane ;—  
Fear not for your carcase, nor yet for your bags,  
'T is only a bundle of human rags !  
Terrible toiling, fivelter, and din,  
Lives for all markets—money to win.  
Out of the moil rings a rallying name !  
Smother it, or it will kindle a flame ;  
Crush it to death in defiance of laws,  
Grind it to atoms with loyal applause.  
Thunders the alarum acrofs the land—  
“ Buckle your harnes on—War is at hand ! ”  
The proud fleet fails for the vauntful shore,  
And the half of its heroes return no more ;  
Flashes the bayonet—glitters the plume,  
A brave-hearted phalanx goes forth in its bloom ;—  
The foe bites the dust, and the glory is bought  
With thousands swept down where they valiantly  
Ever, and on, and roaring away, [fought.  
Day and night, and night and day ;

Ever—and ever—and ever—  
The huge roar ceases never :—  
But Death has his throne,  
And the grass has grown  
O'er many a buried Babylon.

## ERNEST.

Out of sweet heaven—deep in the surging moil  
Of Man ! The first fair page of life has passed ;  
The next lies open here before our eyes :  
And what a page ! and what a world ! and what  
The motley stuff that moulds and fashions it !  
Stay—stay old Time !—not yet awhile. Turn back  
That golden leaf of pleasanter peace,  
Which, like the summering of the rosy fields,  
Makes a bright Eden of the deepest shade.  
Again—and yet again. O, thou young Life,  
Sparkling and buoyant as a July morn,  
Lift up thy chubby hands and happy eyes,  
And laugh to madness o'er the ruddy leas ;  
Youth vigorous and bold, with the free winds  
Singing wild music through thy truant hair ;  
Ye wooing hearts and holidays of love—  
Pass not away for ever, but return  
Like Spring to earth, like warblers to the woods,  
And veil this boundless Babeldom of wealth,  
This rushing roar of splendor, want, and woe.

## ARTHUR.

You lose your time, and what is worse, your breath  
Good Ernest. We have looked behind too long;  
Have wasted precious days with empty shows;  
Waited for what will never come; and lost  
What cannot be regained. The world moves on,  
While we stand chaffering in the way. Our work's  
Undone: Nay, not begun. Resign the past,  
Its tawdry toys and boyish luxuries,  
And live in the battling Now!—I had a home—  
As sweet a heaven as you shall find on earth;  
Had all the love which home and hearts can give;  
Revelled in mirth and beauty like a god,  
Till Joy was throned within our happy midst.  
A fair young bride came blushing with the Spring,  
And goldened all the Summer-time, and walkt  
Amid the Autumn sheaves, gleaning bright ears  
Of hope to wreath old Winter's brow and fill  
His soul with bliss whom she did love so well.  
Woe, woe to me:—The pale-faced Spoiler came,  
And twice he sent his arrow to my heart—  
For there was nestling, O, so fair a flower,  
And at its lips a bud, a pretty bud  
Just peeping into day.—My wife!—my child!  
He flew them both and stript me like an oak.

ERNEST.

And now ?

ARTHUR.

I have no wife, no child, no home :  
My altar 's crusht, my idol 's in the dust.  
I fled the wilderness and sought the world,  
And drank the cup of frenzy to the dregs.  
Go, ask each second passer-by how stands  
The account of life with them !—the tale oft told.  
We carry happiness upon our clothes,  
While all beneath is raging with the fires  
Of Hope—Ambition—Ruin—and Despair.

ERNEST.

And still the world goes streaming to and fro,  
Crowding by millions every stair and street,  
Eager, intent, and hot with thirsty aim :

ARTHUR.

With thirsty aim, with eager, hot intent  
To strangle one another—friend or foe,  
It boots not who, or what, or where, or when,  
So it but brings good grist to Mammon's mill.

ERNEST.

The univerfal strife is—how to live !—

ARTHUR.

And how to pile the human fabric up  
Until it tops the tower it leaned upon.  
This man turns off his barrow for an afs,  
Then drives it to his neighbour's croft to feed :  
Your hail-friend tugs you tightly by the fleeve,  
Bids you good day, asks blandly for your health,  
And ends the fufs with—"Is their nothing now  
You need ?—I've a rare bargain ; juft look in,  
And by my faith I'll make it worth your while ;"  
Your magnate has his carriage, hall, and church,  
His city mart—with call-birds at the door,  
Worships in gold and crimfon, kneels to Heaven  
On Sabbath day, and fchemes the other fix.  
Your bishop—meek fucceffor of the Twelve,  
Barters his facred sheepfolds, puts them up  
For fale, or auction, as the market goes,  
And gets his office done for wages fuch  
As foot-pads would refufe, though preachers can't.  
The whole land fwarms alive with honeft men,  
And every foul you meet is ripe for heaven ;  
Yet Crime lays murderous hand upon your throat,  
And Fraud its jewelled clutch upon your purfe ;

Whilst brawling Cant shakes hell about your ears,  
And Babylon's great harlot stalks the streets  
To make a gilded play-thing of your Church.  
O, righteous Earth, O, holy happy world ;  
Above 't is very fair, and brightens every hour ;  
Beneath 't is pestilent, and black as Doom.  
Nay be not blind : We spectacle our eyes  
For shame or fashion's sake, and shun the light  
Which God has given us for all righteous means.  
A candid open heart, a truthful tongue,  
A noble purpose and a generous will—  
In all thy wanderings through this human hive  
How many such have crossed thy daily path ?

ERNEST.

Not all I fought ; nor even half the few  
I would have found. Yet are they here and there  
Like beacons on the stormy beach : Brightly  
They beam on human wrecks, and light the path  
Of chartless wanderers o'er the wilds of life.  
I know a little corner of the earth  
Where Happiness sings all the glad year round ;  
Where Love and Charity, like April noons,  
Fill rural homes with rays of warmthful joy :  
I know a man, a good and holy man,  
Who walks with Heaven's great mercy in his heart,  
Which he doth pour from that profluent fount



Like a bright stream its gladness through the vales.  
It is not all a mockery then, though not  
The world our adolescence conjures up  
In airy castles couched with eider-down.

## ARTHUR.

'T is not the world it might be ; not the world  
Our maudlin milkops verse it by the yard,  
Piping sweet frenzy to the moon and stars  
To gild their tinsel paradise below.  
For me !—I've torn the flimsy mask away,  
And see the hollow bauble as it is :  
I've lived it all from dawn to blackest night,  
From beggar's den to fashion's gay boudoir ;  
Lived all the utter sham—and now I swear  
To hold no man my friend, who, knowing this,  
Will not give life and limb to better it.  
Your praters in fine linen splitting straws ;  
Your noble senators—ignoble pack,  
Cutting for places at the public board ;  
Your pigmy satraps aping little kings ;  
Your platform plausible with smooth-gloved hands,  
Drawling low platitudes in high cravats ;  
Your platform patriots whose valiant hearts  
Beat to the sound of festive knives and forks—  
While exiled heroes, banished unto death,  
Starve to their graves and die without a home ;

Your smock-faced brawlers of prolific Rant ;  
Your bubble jobbers in philanthropy ;  
Your princely felons for the public weal ;  
Your blasè loungers, yawning out the life  
That is and mocking that to come ;—and last,  
Tho' not the very least, your bosom friend,  
So like brother, sworn to cousin you :—  
Cast your quick eye along this motley crowd ;  
'T is like a stall of glittering ginger-bread—  
Substance to fight and rotten to the touch.

ERNEST.

Take heed unbridled choler move thee not :  
Thy words are hatchet-blows, and not the smooth  
Keen glancings of the polished knife that probes  
The malady yet scarcely seems to wound.  
Granted, there's earnest work to do : And now  
To seek some mission where the gifts we hold  
May find their rightful service.

ARTHUR.

Ha, ha, ha :—  
Nay not in jest. 'T is madness moves the laugh.  
What service think'ee in this tinsel State  
Could give good office to an honest man ?  
The leaky hulk yields to the stately ship :

This luffs or sails according to the wind ;  
This sweeps all weathers like a giant bird.  
You do not mend a fort with hollow reeds ;  
A patcht house ever lets the water in ;  
You do not prop a tottering tower with sand,  
But raze the gaping ruin to the ground,  
And lay a new foundation firm and strong.  
Destroy and build again is my sole aim ;  
And 't is my self-appointed mission—mine !  
And that it should be yours, and that your heart  
May prompt your will—

ERNEST.

It shall not to do wrong.  
What ! shatter down the house our fathers reared  
Through centuries of tenfold gloom ? Dash out  
The glorious light of Liberty and Truth  
Which heroes fought and martyrs died to win ?  
Preach fierce annihilation of the state ?  
Of kith ?—of kin ?—of institutions ?—laws ?  
And see the land a weeping holocaust ?  
Forbid such bitter day may ever dawn.  
'T is easy to destroy ; but to create  
Needs wisdom rarely born and seldom found,  
Though mouthed abroad like other precious wares,  
And cheap as cabbage in the market-place.  
Children as large as men play wondrous games,

Setting up castles to knock down again.  
 I cannot hold your mission just even though  
 The course seem clear as sun and moon.

ARTHUR.

And so,  
 Like all the compromising herd, you leave  
 Your own good work for future hands to do :  
 You hold the law that Love should spare the few  
 Who eat the many up, and Peace cry—hold !  
 While civil slaughter heaps huge dens of woe,  
 And banquets o'er the ruins of the dead !  
 O, shame upon our heads. We are not men,  
 But pigmies strutting in a genial fun.  
 The land of gods is the land of gods no more ;  
 We crawl where our great fathers stood erect ;  
 We live from hand to mouth, and let the day  
 Suffice for whatsoever it may bring.  
 Our rulers hold the dice and set the game,—  
 The people pay the rub yet play it not ;  
 While toadying sycophants bow—Yes, or No,  
 Vow that it is, or swear it is not so.  
 O, there are scenes within this gilded mirk  
 Should move the world's great heart of human love ;  
 Yet dastards wall them off from sympathy,  
 As too unseemly for these gentle times.  
 'Tis vain to plead where pleading is in vain ;

But 't is not vain to walk with pitying soul  
Through gibing catacombs, where wretches swarm  
Like hungry wolves and tear each other's throats  
In famishing despair ; where sister-souls  
Work out their bitter days of starving toil,  
And living, pray to die ; where myriads cry  
For blessed light while darkness hems them in.  
Come, look these human horrors in the face,  
Behold them in their abject nakedness,  
Read every sentence of the open book  
Till the great woe is stamped upon your soul,  
And fires you with a high and stern resolve.

ERNEST.

Down to the lowest deep with patient heed ;  
Who would not read must be a slave indeed.

ARTHUR.

First mark that glimpse of sunshine through the mist—  
A fair young mother Love's first pledge hath kist :—

“ Little stranger, merry ranger,  
“ Thro' Life's happy budding bowers,

“ Glad we meet you, joyful greet you  
“ In your funny, sinless hours.

“ What your bliss is—crowned with kisses,  
“ All the guardian angels know ;  
“ What you may be, smiling baby,  
“ Is not writ upon your brow.

“ Bonny Mary, little fairy,  
“ Parent hearts do welcome ye  
“ As a blessing whose possessing  
“ Will a source of pleasure be.

“ Baby Mary, bright and airy,  
“ Future hope and present pride ;  
“ Polly Poppit, soon to hop it  
“ From your gentle mother’s side.

“ First the rattle, then the prattle,  
“ Then the toddling up and down ;  
“ Lots of playthings, O, such gay things—  
“ Boxes full at half-a-crown.

“ Come the school-days, rod-and-rule days,  
“ Must be up and there at nine ;  
“ Merry faces in their places,  
“ Clean and neat but never fine.

“ A. B. C.—those letters three,  
“ Every learner must begin with ;  
“ Then to pore o’er twenty more  
“ Which we talk, and sing, and sin with.

“ From the fairy to Miss Mary,  
“ Seems but just a summer’s day ;  
“ Then white dresses, and bright tresses,  
“ Out in the meadows, away, away.

“ Youthful eyeing, sweetheart trying  
“ How to win the gentle one ;  
“ And the time comes, as a chime comes,  
“ Ringing ‘ Yes ’ for love alone.

“ Fond consentment, sweet contentment,  
“ Looking for the days to come :  
“ Tearful going—prayer bestowing—  
“ Wistful sighs for Childhood’s Home.

“ Thus dear Nature, blessed creature,  
“ Marks our baby-journies out ;  
“ And we still go, and we will go,  
“ Up and down and round about.

“ May your coming, like the humming  
“ Of the early summer bee,  
“ Bring such gladness that all sadness  
“ Shall be lost in loving ye.”

ERNEST.

The infant bursting of a rosy Morn :  
May Noon be cloudless, and the distant Eve  
Fade softly into pure and perfect heaven.

ARTHUR.

Amen. Such love, such young spontaneous joy,  
Tunes the harsh strings of life and sets  
The pulses all a-glow. 'T is time—yet stay ;  
Turn but your head and close your eyes ; unlid  
Them to their wont—say, where 's the heaven now ?  
Hear't the low wail that wrings a mother's heart ?—

“ Gone, gone my beautiful boy,  
“ Gone in his bonnie young bloom ;  
“ The light of the day swept swiftly away,  
“ Life's paradise buried in gloom.

“ Joy, joy of my worshipping heart,  
“ Joy of my pillowing breast ;  
“ He 's passed from my sight, and the full delight  
“ Of my love is for ever unblest.

“ Still, still the prattling tongue,  
“ Still in the silence of death ;



“ The forehead so fair, with its bright Saxon hair,  
“ Bedewed with the Spoiler’s breath.

“ Life, life was in every limb,  
“ Life in the roof-ringing laugh ;  
“ They said he would grow ruddy Manhood to know,  
“ And the strength of the strongest quaff.

“ Dead, dead, and he hears not my voice,  
“ Dead in the morning of joy ;  
“ I call him by name, yet he slumbers the same—  
“ My Alec. my beautiful boy.

“ Stay, stay, don’t take him away ;  
“ Stay—and in pitying sorrow,  
“ The Disposer may give, and the pallid one live  
“ To bless me again ere to-morrow.

“ Peace, peace, and Thy will be done ;  
“ Peace to the life that was given ;  
“ His rest is the grave, where the wild-flowers wave,  
“ Till I clasp my sweet boy in heaven.

“ No, no, not a favorite toy,  
“ No, not his whip nor his ball,  
“ But I’ll store with my love for the angel above,  
“ And tenderly treasure them all.

“Tears, tears, I cannot but weep,  
“Tears at each voice in the street;  
“Not a sound went by, but my blue-eyed boy  
“Would echo it clear and sweet;

“Sleep, sleep my unfolded bud,  
“Sleep from the storm and the strife;  
“And Memory’s harp, o’er my sorrow so sharp,  
“Shall breathe the sweet song of thy life.”

ERNEST.

A mother’s wail indeed, and sorrow deep;  
Yet not so deep but hope may smile again,  
And faith make peace withal—

ARTHUR.

Why clutch me thus?  
What look your steadfast eyes upon?

ERNEST.

Grim, gaunt and hungry men;  
Women in filthy rags;

Children in tatters swarming like ants  
In gutters stagnant, stench'd,  
And reeking pestilence ;  
Cellars that seethe with wretchedness ;  
Dark dens that lean on rotten props,  
And know no glimpse of day ;  
Herd-wallowing misery and shades of death ;  
Shoeless striplings daubing their fellow's face  
With mire, and shameless girls who look  
On lewdly, urging the vile sport ;  
A workhouse grim with gloom ;  
A crowded jail, and scaffold thronged by thieves ;  
Toilers a-weary, flaving, flaving on,  
Through day and night,  
Awake and in their dreams ;  
Want-wasted hands held up for bread  
To Him who feeds the poor ;  
Pale, parched lips moving in silent prayer  
For that sweet peace which death alone can bring ;  
Sly baby rogues,  
And rogues with hoary hair ;  
A fiend, debauched with villainy,  
Clutching the throat of her he vowed to love ;  
A dark assassin skulking from his lair,  
To plunge his guardless victim down to death ;  
A wild despairing man, stabbing  
His life out in a naked room ;—  
Hold, hold, poor victim.—

ARTHUR.

Ay, victim indeed.

And thus pale spirits pass us every hour,  
Shrieking and shuddering to the silent Gloom.  
These for your note, and mission too.—And now !

ERNEST.

We might have dreamed—or this might be a dream !

ARTHUR.

And 't is a dream—a Day-mare out of doors ;  
Fashion abroad to air itself an hour.  
Mark the prolific elegance ; Proud men  
And gorgeous women in the pomp and pride  
Of high estate ; the rouè and the rake ;  
A park of flaunting butterflies and strings  
Of coaches glittering with fair dames who breathe  
Voluptuous odours to the languid air ;  
A banquet drunk with braggodocian brawl ;  
A feast of Civic toasting with Young Day  
Laughing at Revel reeling off to bed ;  
A Senate of wise men who lounge and jest  
According to their taste and pass the year  
With promises of something for the next ;  
A seat of learning piled with mines of thought,

And students training for the pliant oar,  
The race, the revel, and the wild debauch ;  
A string of lacqueys with the Word of God  
For worshippers devout who walk before ;  
A Paul of parasites—a pulpit pet,  
Gloved like a lady toileted for sale ;  
Huge stalls hung round with trappings such as He,  
Who had not where to lay his sacred head,  
Had blest the needy with ; while these good men,  
Like pampered oxen feeding for the show,  
Grow fat with having nothing else to do.

ERNEST.

And yet—with all this lavish life, this waste  
Of wealth, from him who holds the keys of earth,  
To him who fain would hold the keys of heaven—  
Each passer-by with quick unquiet shrug,  
Avoids the haunts where vice and misery dwell,  
Kerchiefs his nose and turns another way.

ARTHUR.

These are not tutored in the vulgar faith  
Of charity which doeth daily good ;  
Nor in that inner grace which feeds the souls  
Of those who hunger after Light and Truth.  
Like partial drops of summer rain upon

A hot and thirsty road, a spirit here  
And there, laden with blessed manna, comes,  
And with a very bounteousness of soul,  
Gives all its wealth of love and sympathy  
To lighten ills, and better what is bad.

ERNEST.

The silvery glintings of the rivulet  
Down the broad channel of the furling tide.

ARTHUR.

The illustration's apt ; so pass along,  
And let your vision sweep the human sea  
Which now and ever casts revealings up,  
And heaves its ghastly wrecks on either shore.  
The day is waning ; night comes robed with stars ;  
The city's all ablaze with gorgeous fires ;  
And listless life awakes as from a dream.

ERNEST.

What course wilt steer ?

ARTHUR.

The course the tide shall go.

How pours the stream of gilded mirth along  
To gaudy palaces and tinsel shades,  
Where masked throngs—the beauty of the land,  
Waltz out the feverish hours!—Mark yonder form—  
You've known it well and long; the lord that led  
Fair Jessie from her May-day bower now leads  
A haughty Juno, floating through the maze  
With peerless pride. See how his wild eye gloats  
Upon her snowy charms—but not with love;  
Passion, unbridled, holds him at its beck,  
He nothing loth to follow to the end.

ERNEST.

And in so questionable a place?

ARTHUR.

Why not?

But look ye, they have left the giddy dance;  
She leans upon his arm, her very lips  
Breathing upon his own;—they boldly dare  
The secret avenue—unmask, and lo!—  
The wedded angel of his faithful friend.  
We ape great follies, and are seldom slow  
To make them impious. Thus thousands fall  
From blushing virtue to unbushing vice.  
They lift the curtains of yon midnight den—

No shame, no bashful beauty meets your eye,  
But flimsy, torn, and tattered wrecks of men  
And women roistering o'er the mouth of hell;  
Do you not hear that desperation laugh  
Ringing above the revel of the night?—  
“'T is the last stake!”—a gamester flies to drink  
The dregs of Frenzy's deadly cup and blast  
Dear life for ever. Hope, and peace, and joy  
Return no more. The dream of hazard-wealth  
Has fled, and nothing stays but woe untold,  
And hag-browed Conscience which will never die.  
Along the city's night parade a girl—  
Once fair to look upon, with nature warm  
And pure, and virtues fragrant as the breath  
Of flowers, a lost and lonely creature prowls  
In search of vile existence—her sad wreck  
Of young and faded life. O, she had loves,  
And joys and daisy-dreams before her fall—

## ERNEST.

See! how she looks yet shuns me with her pale  
Familiar face! Methinks I knew her once—  
A bonny rose that grew beside the Gade,  
Now crushed and blighted in its winsome bloom.  
Ye gentle messengers 'twixt heaven and earth,  
Shield with your spotless wings this poor forlorn,  
And blot her errors from the Book of Life.



## ARTHUR.

I saw a pauper funeral to-day,  
With but one solitary soul to mourn:  
And by the mourner well I knew the dead.  
When first I saw her, beautiful and pure,  
Her face was like an angels—full of joy,  
And love, and sympathy. So fair she was,  
I sought her daily path to look upon  
Such loveliness as won ere it had wooed.  
I saw her once again—a gaudy, gay,  
And flaunting thing, pale shadow of the past;  
Beauty in ruins. And the ruins fell  
In graceful atoms; but no hand was there  
To gather up the wreck. Haggard and wild,  
And lost to peace and joy, the frail one fled  
From bartered life ere she had fairly lived.  
Poor Helen; once she looked from out the gloom,  
And panted for the sun. 'T was all a-cold.  
Rude tongues shot arrows, eyes sent shafts of scorn,  
And heads that bowed now turned to gibe and scoff:  
The pitying world poured poison in her soul  
And cast her back to die. She had a child—  
The dowry now of one so schooled in craft,  
Its orphanhood will yield her fruitful gain:  
'T will be the dolorous widow's wretched plaint  
Through stormy days and ever dreary nights;  
Prattle in infant oaths; rob i' th' sun;

Grow deft at cunning, and learn every fin  
As ardently as old men learn their prayers.  
There 's little charity for dawning vice,  
Yet pity for the felon with the gyves  
Upon his limbs ; or when the scaffold looms  
Portentous, waiting for the murderer's life,  
Who lived by virtue of the right to wrong.

ERNEST.

And these are they who need the willing heart,  
And ready hand to lift them from the mire.

ARTHUR.

Truly ; but ere they fall, not after it.  
Nurture the bud, nor wait the faded bloom  
To store your homes with beauty and delight.  
And 't will be nurtured hence—but let that pass ;  
And let us leave yon ribbald mirth behind,  
To glance at something nearer to our hearts.

ERNEST.

Which something meets you in the face. Tell me,  
If ought you know—and much you store in thought  
Of every passing incident in life,  
What youth is he who greets you with a smile

So gravely sad, and yet so full of soul ?  
He touched your skirts but now ; and 't was as though  
Some fainted spirit fanned my flushing cheek :  
I feel that presence like a power that draws  
Me to itself by kindred sympathy.  
He 's surely young in years !

ARTHUR.

Yet old in thought.

ERNEST.

Scarce thirty summers !

ARTHUR.

Nay, not twenty-five !  
Yet sixty winters might have swept their storms  
Across his brow and withered up his life.  
In the aspiring buoyancy of youth  
He thought to reach the myriad-heart of man,  
And fill the world's vast temple with a song  
Should echo to the shores of Evermore.

ERNEST.

A noble aim.

ARTHUR.

Most ignobly contemned.  
The youth was frenzy-struck ; some mother's son  
Who mused on infant pap ; conspired with myths  
To startle all the world ; and by some sleight  
Of hand, did hope at no far distant day,  
To sit enthroned on high Olympus' top.  
Thus damning censors crushed his lyre ; and now  
The stricken poet, in his narrow room,  
Toils out the long night hours with throbbing brain,  
'Midst hope and doubt, 'midst doubt and hope—the far-  
Of unapportioned Thought ; the martyr-wreath  
Of Genius whose deep spirit quarries out  
The hidden diamond it may not hold  
With life.

ERNEST.

Tell me what madness he hath sung.

ARTHUR.

Here are some sacred heart-throbs which I store  
With precious care. I gathered them as flowers  
That perfume when the Summer's past away.

“The bright flowers mingle in the glade,  
“The wild bee wooes the heather,  
“The song-birds warble through the shade,  
“And live and love together ;  
“All nature joy and pleasure sings  
“In full harmonious story,  
“Spring pipes Æolian murmurings,  
“And Winter anthems hoary ;  
“In every chord of Beauty’s harp  
“There ’s melody and gladness—  
“’T is only man feels sorrow sharp,  
“And drinks the cup of sadness ;  
“Nor might of mind, nor genius rare,  
“Escape the fatal potion ;  
“The loftiest soul has drunk despair  
“From Life’s deep, darkling ocean.  
“We revel in the poet’s theme,  
“The painter’s great creation,  
“Too oft to follow in the stream  
“Of empty adulation.  
“Time lays his hand on rich and poor,  
“But Poverty feels keenest ;  
“And Want has barred the student’s door  
“When life and thought were greenest :  
“The mind’s hard toil, the midnight lamp,  
“The world’s uncertain favours,  
“Hopes which a host of ills will damp,  
“And fame that ever wavers ;—

" These have prostrated many a heart  
 " Endowed with noblest feelings,  
 " Winged haggard sorrow's deadly dart,  
 " And crushed the soul's revealings.  
 " Gaunt Age stoops on with wrinkled brow,  
 " Each lessening day delightfuls—  
 " No gleam of joy, no bright dreams now,  
 " To make one dark day nightless:  
 " Despair, with wild and frenzied eye,  
 " Clouds every dawn with sorrow ;—  
 " 'T is death to live, 't is doubt to die,  
 " Hope ever cries—' To-morrow,'  
 " O, for a loyal brotherhood  
 " Of Nature's great and gifted,  
 " To save from Lethe's stormful flood  
 " The struggling and the drifted :  
 " Then shall the Triune Arts stand forth,  
 " With goodly honours gleaming,  
 " And send this mission through the earth :—  
 " " The Sun of mind is beaming !  
 " " Hail wreck of Genius cease to pine,  
 " " A bright heaven smiles above thee ;  
 " " A home for weary Worth is thine  
 " " From hearts who prize and love thee.' "

Pale, pallid thinker, ere the brotherhood  
 Which haunts his dreams shall hail or hold him such,  
 A brotherhood of sterner purpose will  
 Arise to hail the world and all the great

And noble who have life and hopes to save.  
Let every despot die ; and let the false  
And faithless pay the forfeit of their frauds.  
'T is murmuring in the winds some few leagues off,  
And will be here ere wickedness shall stain  
Another year with bad, unrighteous crimes.  
Wrong laughs at Justice ; Heaven is put to shame ;  
Great God is mocked, and Mammon deified ;  
The air we breathe is foul with secret deeds ;  
Corruption taints our orisons ; while saints  
Are canonized for most unholy gain,  
And every temple sets its idol up.  
'T is coming, Ernest, and will soon be here.

ERNEST.

Will soon be here ? Pray what will soon be here ?

ARTHUR.

The day of Justice and of Judgement too.  
'T is whispering now had we but ears to hear :  
But such the boundless confidence, no harm  
Can come to England, none, some wise men say !

ERNEST.

Nor do you pray for harm to England !—

ARTHUR.

No ;

I pray for retributive War, that Right  
May reign for evermore.—Nay, start not thus ;  
There are no bayonets beneath our feet !  
No secret trains are laid to blow us up !  
We walk on feathers, sleep on softest down,  
And every man 's a castle in himself.

ERNEST.

Nay then, you mock me as I were a slave,  
Having nor eyes to see, nor heart to feel.  
Give me to know, and knowing, I will dare  
And do the sternest duty of a man.  
In the dear home which gave my roofless head  
A parent shelter, I was daily taught  
To love my neighbour as myself ; to aid  
The needy ; soothe the sick with earnest care ;  
Be to all men a helper and a friend ;  
Seek good and hallow it ; nor harbour wrong  
'Gainst any living thing in this wide world.  
These precepts will I hold—but not to see  
The bitter woes, which now I look upon,  
Passed by. I only pray for light to shine  
Upon the path in which I ought to go :  
That found, I am not worthy of my name



If fear cast any shadow on the way.  
Whence comes the warning?—As I ask  
The answer comes. Say, is it so?—from France !

ARTHUR.

From France, or nowhere, as you well divine.

ERNEST.

There was a France which had a chosen king,  
And sent him headless to his regal grave ;  
Laid murderous hands upon his precious loves,  
And crushed them with its fierce and bloody heel.  
Throneless, she swarmed with sacrilegious hordes,  
Who reeled with drunken slaughter through her streets ;  
Tore up the old foundations of her Laws ;  
Made barriers of her glories ; stripped her bare  
As naked beggar ; cursed her royal name ;  
Dungeoned her weeping Beauty and her Love ;  
And in the name of shrieking Liberty,  
Unroofed her towering citadels of Thought  
By thousands, till the glutted channels choked  
With human blood, and Terror reigned supreme.  
Fraternal massacre, begorged with slaughter—paused :  
And Retribution, with remorseless ire,  
And fiery Wrath, and terrible Revenge,  
Sought blood for blood, and tracked the banded ghouls

To direful death and most abhorrent woe ;  
While he, their priest incarnate, dragged to doom,  
Immortalized his day of infamy  
By dying like a dog. And at whose hands ?  
Wast not, perchance, that gibing, scoffing crowd,  
Which yesterday did kiss his bloody skirts  
As more than man, and little less than God ?

ARTHUR,

What then ?

ERNEST.

Why paradox tumultuous.  
Upon the ruins of that kingle's wreck  
An empire towers : and from its frowning crest  
A blazing meteor hurls his furious bolts  
Of war, till Europe trembles with the shock.  
With ruthless sword he lays the nations waste ;  
Grasps at the world !—when lo, the bubble breaks,  
Breaks in his hand. Ambition plays him false.  
Armies of heroes have gone down to death,  
And yet the Imperial fabric falls, and France,  
Poor immolated France, weeps in her weeds.  
But 't were not well to sorrow thus too long :—  
She gives her empire for a king—and he !

ARTHUR.

Will fall as faithless rulers should ; as fell  
Our royal martyr gone before ; and France,  
With the long erring past before her eyes,  
Will wake to glorious liberty, and make  
The world's enslavers know that God is just ;  
That vengeance is at hand ; that now the day  
Of wrath has come. And so, to France I go.

ERNEST.

And I will with you.

ARTHUR.

Wherefore say you so ?

ERNEST.

To mark the course the stormy torrent takes,  
What good it purposes, or ill it makes ;  
To read and learn, to garner up and blot,  
Hold what is just and cancel what is not.

## TO JESSIE.

**L**IKE a meadow in the Spring-time,  
Like a croft of blooming trees,  
Like the bride of day at midnight,  
Like a June of melodies,  
Like a lute among the willows,  
Like a summer-piping lea—  
Smiles the beauty of my lover,  
Echoes her dear voice to me.  
Wherefore art thou gentle Jessie,  
Lonely in our native Dale ;  
Looking for the joy that comes not,  
Waiting till thy cheek grows pale ?  
Thou art leaning o'er the wicket,  
Sadness is upon thy brow ;

Anxious eyes say—He is coming,  
But the full heart answers—

No ;

'T is his dear soul in a letter—  
Looked for, longed for, prayed for so.  
He is coming ! 'T will be shortly,  
And our joy will be complete :  
O, the blessed flowers are laughing,  
Laughing all about our feet.  
'T is his dear soul in a letter,  
Shall I, dare I break the seal ?  
Fruit so rich and wine so precious,  
Life and soul for many a meal.  
I will read it all to tatters,  
Trace it like a precious chart,  
Keep the veriest of its fragments  
In the casket of my heart.  
'T is his dear soul in a letter,  
Now to know my joys or fears !—  
Give me thy strong soul dear Ernest,  
Mine is gushing out in tears.

Dear devoted, long I've waited  
For some happy news to tell,  
But there come no El Dorados  
Where the Eternal Pleasures dwell.  
Dark it is, and dreary, dreary,  
Missions fought, but never found ;

Ah, sweet life, and when I know not,  
Since to fetters man is bound,  
Which nor love with plaintive wooings  
Can their stubborn purpose break.  
Ere our lips may meet again love  
Many a coward's heart will quake ;  
Many a bridal will be blighted,  
Many a promised trysting parted,  
Many a cheerful home a-lonely,  
Many a widow broken-hearted.  
Silence is a weary sorrow ;  
Sorrow is a grief to tell ;  
You would know the promised Wherefore,  
Haunting memory like a spell :  
O to ease thy heart's deep asking,  
O to speak in gentlest words,  
Like the brooklet's wildering music,  
Like the minstrelsy of birds.  
Dear companion of my childhood,  
Rosy with the kiss of Morn,—  
How I love thee, how I bless thee  
From my heart's intense forlorn.  
And that heart is ever with thee,  
Pouring out its fondest woes,  
Seeking welcomes to thy bosom,  
And Eternals of repose.  
Hold me in thy angel-keeping,  
Lead me to the hills above,

Light the vales of doubt and darkness  
With the sunbeams of thy love.  
Every word which thou hast spoken,  
Every joy which thou hast given,  
Every sweet—Good night dear Ernest,  
Fills me with bright hope and heaven.  
Gloomy is the way before me—  
Yet it should be bravely trod ;  
He who would be nature-noble,  
Must himself find out the road.  
Bear my love and sacred duty  
To my boyhood's orphan home ;  
Tell the precious ones who love me—  
“ If he lives he's sure to come.”  
Not a kind word is forgotten,  
Not a meadow, dell, or tree ;  
Home, and loves, and scenes grow brighter  
As I look through them to thee :  
And I look to thee dear Jessie  
As the haven of my life ;  
And I ever live to bless thee  
As my gentle spirit wife.

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OUR VILLAGE.

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UP with the lark in the morning,  
Over the hills betimes,  
Out in your summer adorning,  
Come with the welcoming chimes ;  
Faces as fresh as the meadows,  
Voices as clear as the streams,  
Graces that cast their fair shadows  
O'er the leas of our hopefulest dreams.  
Aye for the sweet little village,  
Aye for the bonnie and rare,  
Aye for the harvest and tillage  
That bring us our old Statty Fair.



Mother she buffles so featly,  
And sands down the clean cottage floor,  
Trigs out in her gayest as neatly  
As in the bright summers afore ;  
Such lots of old friends will be coming,  
And lassies and lads all a-gig ;  
Such fiddling, piping, and drumming,  
With many a fong and a jig.

She said she 'd be here as we parted  
Last night at the old Wishing-Gate—  
If there 's aught in the world that 's true-hearted  
I know 't is my dear little Kate ;  
Over the green she is hieing,  
Bright as a beam of the sun ;  
And Laughter with Mirth will be vieing  
Like mad ere the day shall be done.

Heartiest, happiest greeting,  
Pleasure in every face :—  
D' ye mind ?—We 'd just such a meeting  
Last year in this very same place !  
Betty and Tom have got married,  
Willie went over the sea ;  
My letter was somehow miscarried,  
But Willie 's aye written to me.

Bartering, chopping, and changing,  
Turning the brightest side out,  
Labour and wages arranging  
O'er smirking good ale and brown stout :  
Farmer and Roger can't hit it,  
Gaffer looks after his beer ;  
Dolly will try hard to get it—  
'T is only just six pounds a-year.

Stalls smothered over with treasure,  
Gingerbread nobles in gold,  
Jokes cut and dried without measure,  
Fortunes mysteriously told :  
Juvenile banks are all broken,  
Or cleared at the point of the knife—  
For every fairing bespoken,  
Resign your whole purse or your life !

Good Parson Frank all surrounded  
With troops of soliciting hands ;  
They know that his love is unbounded,  
And how his good nature expands ;  
Not one of the smiling young faces  
But fills his whole being with joy—  
In each palm a kind present he places  
With " Bless you " my girl or my boy.

Long on this day have we counted—  
Dear Mary and Johnny and I,  
To see all the fine people mounted  
On stages so grand and so high :  
The dwarf and the monstrous giant,  
The pig learned in music and law,  
Great lions and tigers defiant,  
With wonders the world never saw.

Bears from the regions of Polar,  
Donkeys trigged out for the race,  
Fools pulling grins through a collar,  
Swift men stript for the chase :  
Climbing the pole for mutton,  
Jumping in sacks for cheer,  
Throwing the quoit o'er the button,  
Heaving the hammer for beer.

Cheap John with a saw is haranguing  
A crowd at the tail of his cart,  
The deafening gong is a-clanging  
Wild chorus to every art ;  
The Clown pulls his broadest grimaces,  
The Harlequin quivers his wand,  
Fair Columbine measures her paces  
Inspired by a clashing brass-band.

"Walk up" through a hoarse trumpet bellows,  
 To stark staring mouths and great eyes—  
 "All in to begin my fine fellows,  
 Walk up and walk in if you're wise:"  
 And the bandit rifles and plunders,  
 Young Momus wags mischievous jaws,  
 Stern Tragedy rages and thunders  
 'Midst storms of uproarious applause.

Out of the merry commotion  
 The old folks saunter away,  
 And talk o'er the joy with devotion  
 As Evening curtains the day:  
 Happy looks every creature,  
 Cheerful the fun goes down,  
 And the bright swarthy brow of Dame Nature  
 Is wreathed with her Autumn crown.

Aye for the sweet little village,  
 Aye for the bonnie and rare,  
 Aye for the harvest and tillage  
 Which brings us our old Statty Fair.

#### ARTIST.

'T is a rude sketch—and yet there's something in't;  
 Touches of fun, of character, and face,  
 A lusty, laughing, merry-hearted glint  
 Of what a cunning-hand would bolder trace.

Great Nature ! with thy unfathomable store  
Of precious, priceless treasures, the whole earth  
Is full, and rich, and royal as of yore,  
When Dawn and Day first sung thy rosy birth.  
Thou art the source of Beauty for all Time—  
Joy of the valley—Gladness of the lea,  
Voice of the mountains—boundless and sublime.  
The painter is a wooing child to thee ;  
With wistful heed he traces every form  
Of thy divinity—his faith as pure,  
The worship of his heart as true and warm  
As fondest lovers.

I wonder if this worthy shepherd can  
Find any touch of rustic nature here,  
Or of himself as now he stood, good man,  
Watching the festive mirth !—He 's coming near.  
The countenance serene with reverend age,  
And stooping shoulders wreathed with silvery hair,  
Bespeak the village patriarch and sage.  
He has the goodly bearing and the air  
Of one who well could grace that pastoral crook  
So coveted by preachers now-a-days.  
Methinks I read his heart in that true book,  
The eyes divine, so steadfast in their gaze.  
Good evening shepherd : I am fain to know,  
From one of rustic life and rural birth,  
If this rough sketch in anywise doth show

The hearty humour of that village mirth  
Which won your ear and genial smile just now ?

JOSEPH.

I'm not a painter !

ARTIST.

Yet may be a judge,  
Of what is good or bad in painter's art.

JOSEPH.

He will have truer taste, though but a smudge,  
Who judges by tuition, not his heart.

ARTIST.

How often have you looked across the leas  
In rosy Spring and fruitful Summer-time,  
And felt the beauty of the flowers and trees  
Tune your whole being to a heavenly chime ?  
You had the inward art and truly read,  
The lines upon the canvas as they came,  
With their fair forms and blending colours spread  
Before your eyes—even beautiful to name.

JOSEPH.

Yet still I do but read—you read and paint,  
And therefore ask yourself if wrong or right  
The humour is. The sun's last beams grow faint,  
And I must fold my sheep ere it be night.

ARTIST.

I'll with you straight ; yet yield your judgement friend !  
I ask from pure desire.

JOSEPH.

Well, be it so.—

'T is not amiss—'t would take a mort to mend  
It I should say, that is if I may know.  
And yet I only see ; I cannot hear.  
The canvas does not breathe, and laugh, and sing !  
There is no voice of birds to charm the ear,  
No echo of the brooklet's merry ring !  
I would not give the prattle of a child,  
The rosy laughter of a village maid,  
For all Arts' great creations, stored and piled  
With high importance and supreme parade.

## ARTIST.

I love the laughter and the prattle too,  
And yet the painter's art no wit the less:—  
See in my wanderings beauties ever new,  
And fair as this fair earth can well possess.  
Laughter, and mirth, and bickers full of song  
Gladden the wildest desert—heard, and felt,  
And loved, and revelled in the Ages long.  
I've sat within a nook whose joy would melt  
A city cynic's heart,—a nook that sung  
And smiled all round and over head,  
With wild notes the bright rippling boughs among;  
The honeysuckle and the white rose wed  
In graceful sisterhood; beneath my feet  
A carpet of soft moss; around me flowers  
That lookt into my eyes with love as sweet  
As Beauty to the fairest maiden dowers.  
And as the picture grew upon my sight,  
I made it all my own; became a child  
Of Nature, wooed her with intense delight,  
And felt as Fame had touched me when she smiled.  
Too little of our own fair fatherland  
Finds favour with the student now-a-days;  
And yet the spirit of a master-hand  
Could fill the world with scenes whose every phase  
Hath native character, and stands alone  
In sweet rusticity and rural worth:



But these touch not the taste ; and Art has shown  
As many tricks as kittens on the hearth,  
To catch the tone and temper of the age—  
Painter and poet in one great despair  
To make their antic fantasies the rage,  
Regioned in mist and castled in the air.  
O, brave old Saxon England, bold and free,  
Set in the world of waters like a star  
In heaven.—What other land is like to thee,  
Thou glorious beacon hailed from shores afar ?  
The sunny dales of Devon with their rills,  
And laughing lanes, and primrose-smothered meads,  
And crofts of apple-bloom ; the dark-browed hills  
Of Cornwall, rich with treasure and brave deeds  
Anent old Castle Dinas and the king,  
Good Arthur and his gay and gallant knights,  
And grand old minstrels—making Albion ring  
With royal revel and victorious fights ;  
The crumbling monuments of barbed yore—  
From the white bulwarks of the Southern sea,  
To those stern strongholds by the Northern shore,  
Pealing eternal anthems stormfully.  
I've looked upon these glories as they shone  
Replendent in the sun, or when the storms  
Shrieked wildering up the hills : Nor thus alone,  
But Merrie Englands in a thousand forms.—  
Day-breaks upon the mountains crowned with light—  
Skiddaw their queen, and Snowdon royal fire ;

Sunsets in vallies ringing with delight  
Amid that Eden of the tuneful quire  
Whose latest minstrel by the Rothay sleeps,  
In the fair temple of his goodly fame ;  
Twilights where Kenilworth her glory keeps,  
Or fairer Tintern holds a peerless name ;  
Midnights a-thro' the shades of moonlit piles,  
When leafy seas and gently rippling winds  
Sing sweetest music o'er the slumbering Isles,  
And balmy Silence her soft pillow finds.  
And last—and lovely too, this pleasant Dale !

JOSEPH.

'T is suited for the pencil, not the pen :  
Yonder old castle memories many a tale  
Of deeds that shudder from the sight of men.  
See how it frowns while all around is gay !  
It hath not smiled for many a mortal year,  
Save a bright glint of sunshine one May-day,  
Which yet may cost poor bodies something dear.  
'T is oft in rural as in city life—  
The fairest scene so peaceful to the sight,  
Within its deeper haunts is marred with strife ;  
And what seemed all a beauty and delight,  
Is cankered and diseased in many a place.  
And thus our neighbour ; as he goes abroad,  
With satisfaction beaming in his face,

We marvel that kind Fortune don't afford  
To deal her favours equally to all :  
Anon he hails us ; shakes us by the hand ;  
Invites us to his ingle—if we call,—  
That smiling face is only for the crowd ;  
His inward happiness is less than ours ;  
Beneath a blighting Upas he is bowed  
Which taints the solace of his silent hours.  
High in the towering Peak of Derbyshire  
A bright and breezy little village stands—  
Pleasant as any mortal could desire,  
Queen of fair streams and palaces and lands :  
'T is such a place as fashion-feasters seek  
To brace the body pampered overmuch,  
To get fresh colour to the sickly cheek,  
And cast away the weary drug and crutch :—  
Lo, grim-eyed Plague, with frightful horror, swept  
The mountain city, blasting with its breath,  
Till fathers, mothers, kith and kindred slept  
In one great shade of heaped and hideous death.  
'T was such a woe as makes the heart a-cold,  
Frowning for ages, echoed sad and oft :—  
And if my prophecy be not too bold,  
Some evil overhangs us here.—

But soft ;  
Up yonder broad and stately avenue  
Rides in wild glee the lord of Avondell,

With bacchanals of most fraternal hue,  
Who aid his devilries by far too well.  
'Tis many a year since any living soul  
Had being in those gloomy halls ; but now !  
They nightly ring with revel and the bowl,  
As 't were all Bedlam in a festive row.  
Our little village is turned upside down,  
The peaceful sabbath marred with noisy mirth,  
The pastor made to feel the patron's frown,  
And virtue menaced for its virgin worth.  
Hark, how they rush along with boisterous yell !  
There 's something in the wind.—'T is Statute night.  
They 'll have an orgie that will cope with hell ;  
Beshrive me, I 'll not picture half the fight :  
Pass on my friend.

ARTIST.

With all my heart.

JOSEPH.

This road  
Will lead us round the hill, and past the pile  
Of Druid stones, hard by the sloping wood,  
Which brings its passing pilgrims many a mile.  
See ! there it stands, dim record of the past ;  
Look at its rude and rugged strength and say

From whence it came, defiant of the blast  
And wreck of Time.

## ARTIST.

Nations have paled away,  
Thrones have been buried in their own deep dust ;  
Man, that was lion-limbed and kingly-browed,  
Now walks a sickly shadow, with the fust  
Of wrinkled sovereignty upon his proud  
But puny soul ; yet these remain for Times  
And Ages yet unwombed, when this old land  
May be the helpless prey of banded mimes—  
Her glory wrested from her palsied hand.  
As light o'er elder Chaos, these have beamed  
Upon the homes and hearts of Briton when  
Her queens were warriors, and the wild hills gleamed  
With barbarous warfare and unconquered men.  
Stand in the midst and measure all your height,  
Or stride the mossy cromlech's awful pile ;—  
These Druid Seers where men of rugged might,  
And not the windy froth of boast and bile.

## JOSEPH.

But surely greater men have lived since then !  
Are living now ; and why not so for aye ?  
And is not God's great Word, writ by the pen

Of Holy Inspiration, mightier pray  
Than Druid fire or Pagan sacrifice ?

ARTIST.

Go, measure thews with Ironside—your swords  
With Lion Richard's—minds with Alfred—vice  
With Arthur's times—Valour, 'gainst conquering hordes,  
With old Caractacus—the Truth of now  
With that of ages past—our modern saints  
With those stern preachers who with blanchless brow  
Scorned, midst the flaming faggot, all the taints  
And mawkish mummeries of sensual creeds,  
Which pest the land where God's great martyrs fell.  
'T was not with Forms, but high and christian Deeds  
Our fathers won the fight they fought so well !  
'To those old Druid ancestors I lean  
With strangest awe :—their rude divining rite  
To that all-potent Sun whose power had been  
Ere yet his burning beams gave life and light :  
Their mystic altars and gigantic piles,  
High beaconed on the mountains far and lone ;  
Their solemn festivals, when all the isles  
Lit up their answering fires, which flash'd and shone  
O'er awful solitudes, while the sweet lark  
Went eastward with her song, and up the sea,  
And o'er the hills, and thro' the forests dark,  
The god of day proclaimed his sovereignty.

See how they bow before his blazing wing,  
And yield him high and holy honours due;  
Their Spirit all Supreme, their kingliest king—  
Throned where his shafts their bright pre-essence drew !

JOSEPH.

All man must worship : Happy he who finds  
That worship which doth lead to Him alone  
Who called all suns and systems, worlds and winds  
From primal darkness—God the only One !  
And here we part : But ere you cross the stile,  
I 'm fain to stay you with a Sabbath chime,  
Which may in somewise help to reconcile  
Your Druid leanings to the present time :—

“ O'er yonder village in the Dale  
“ The sacred sabbath sweetly dawns ;  
“ The cotter leaves his quiet vale,  
“ The worthy Squire his fragrant lawns :  
“ There 's kindred peace in every home,  
“ In every heart a social calm ;  
“ The sun bursts thro' the fading gloom,  
“ And Nature sings her holy Psalm :  
“ And up the leas, and thro' the corn,  
“ Along the pleasant shady way,  
“ Full many a smile bespeaks the morn,  
“ Full many a tongue the toils day :

“ The cheerful bells from Saxon tower  
“ Call old and young, and rich and poor,  
“ To join at the appointed hour,  
“ God’s grace and mercy to implore :  
“ And from his quiet parsonage  
“ The faithful pastor calmly comes—  
“ His heart a pure and spotless page,  
“ His life the very best of tomes :  
“ And there bows many a hoary head,  
“ With ruddy youth and beauty fair ;  
“ The praise is sung, the page is read,  
“ And homely truths are spoken there :  
“ Goodness and love the Word reveals,  
“ The six days weary work to leaven ;  
“ And every earnest hearer feels  
“ Further from earth and nearer heaven :  
“ And he who holds a goodly weal,  
“ And he who long and late doth plod,  
“ Before one holy altar kneel  
“ In humble trust to worship God !  
“ And many a tongue with gladness tells  
“ Of Sabbaths goldening all the soul ;  
“ A heavenly ray the cloud dispels,  
“ And life is brightest at the goal :  
“ Young Joy just bursting into Spring,  
“ Young hearts that never throbbed before,  
“ Young Love in wistful worshipping—  
“ All cling around that old church door.



“ And thus the Rural Sabbath’s flow,  
“ Midst humble homes and sweet content ;  
“ And lowliest hearts with reverence bow  
“ To touch the sacred sacrament.  
“ And not a bird that sings or soars,  
“ And not a flower that scents the air,  
“ O, not a stream that babbling pours,  
“ But swells the Universal Prayer.”

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While the merry birds warble the world to sleep,  
And Joseph the shepherd is folding his sheep,  
A maiden stands lone at her cottage door,  
Awaiting the gladness which comes no more ;  
While a lord and his bevy carouse in the hall,  
To jest out the night amid rolick and brawl.  
And who is the maiden, and who is the lord,  
That stands at the door and sits at the board ?

She lives but in the joy that was ;  
Sweet life hath lost its gladness ;  
The constant star that like a heaven  
Gave every morn its hope and eve its bliss,  
Hath paled away, and days are sad,  
And nights are lone, for O, he does not come.  
She was as happy as a summer bird,  
As cheerful as the Dawn ;

Her soul was living music,  
Hymning to the hopeful hours.  
She was beloved :  
Did love :  
Loves still so deep and tenderly,  
And loving—looks, and yearns  
For him who does not come.  
Spring-time hath come and gone,  
And May-day with its sheen ;  
Summer hath gladdened the fruitful leas,  
And lusty Autumn piled the wain—  
Singing the grateful Harvest Hymn ;  
Old Winter at the Christmas fire,  
Shook his white hair and laught ;  
But—Ernest does not come.  
The Universe hath but one heart,  
The world but one dear love :  
With these !—’t is all a blessed heaven ;  
But wanting these—a dim and starless night.  
O, she is basely wooed,  
And sad is her soul with weeping ;  
For she hath kept her virgin love,  
And her young life for him ;  
But ah, he does not come.  
And if he lives, or if the grave  
Hath closed upon her hopes,  
And he will come no more, no more,  
She knows not ; but her heart

Beats on his being, and her eyes  
Have traced the farewell path along  
Till every tree, and flower, and blade of grass,  
Is painfully familiar, bringing back  
A world of memories whose every joy  
Intensifies the burden of the soul.  
Wistful she seeks the olden way again,  
To see if there be any glimpse of hope  
Before the setting of the sun.—

*(Jessie sings.)*

“ I am a-lonely, I am sad,  
“ Sad with a silent sorrow ;  
“ Longing out the weary day,  
“ Yearning for To-morrow.

“ Sing no more ye mated birds,  
“ It sets my heart a-weeping ;  
“ Close your eyes ye happy flowers,  
“ For mournful days I ’m keeping.”

*(The Voice of the Daisy.)*

“ Maiden sweet your heart is sad,  
“ Sorrow is on your bonnie brow ;  
“ O, while the breezy hills are glad,  
“ Why lonely in the vales below ?

" 'T is summer, and the blooming leas,  
 " 'The mazy nook,  
 " 'The prattling brook,  
 " 'The beechen grove where the cushat coos,  
 " 'The hawthorn hedge where the blackbird woos—  
 " Are wild with merriest melodies.

" A smile ?—a sigh ?—ah, well-a-day,  
 " What is your sorrow maiden, say ?  
 " Perhaps I recall  
 " The joys that fall  
 " Like heaven upon the soul ; recall the days  
 " When Childhood and the daisy-world  
 " Their happy little Edens all unfurled  
 " Before your laughing eyes ;  
 " When Gladness halloed all your ways  
 " With love-inspiring revelries ;  
 " And the noblest part  
 " Of a noble heart  
 " Was ever with your own to cull  
 " The brightest of all the Beautiful.

" But yester-eve a fair girl came this way  
 " To gather flowers, and culled a posie gay ;  
 " And as she culled she sung—so sweetly sung,  
 " Our airy halls with silvan music rung.  
 " She bent her deep blue eyes on me,—  
 " The simple daisy of the lea ;

“ A tear was on her cheek,  
“ Her glowing, gladsome cheek ;  
“ And bending low her head,  
“ In melody she said :—  
“ ‘ Modest daisy live and smile  
“ ‘ Thy longest latest hour ;  
“ ‘ I will not pluck thee bonnie flower,  
“ ‘ But woo thee by the rustic stile,  
“ ‘ While the rippling rill  
“ ‘ Sings down to the Mill,  
“ ‘ And the lark sings overhead.’

“ That simple song,  
“ Our aisles along,  
“ Was answered by a thousand throats,  
“ All piping out the freshest notes,  
“ Till hedge and tree,  
“ Rang merrily,  
“ And Evening walkt in heavenly light,  
“ While Hesperus as an angel bright,  
“ Night’s dewy incense softly showered  
“ O’er silent Nature eider-bowered ;  
“ And I, in virtue of my birth,  
“ Was left to live my hour on earth.

“ To me ’t is given to whisper peace  
“ To love forsaken. Maiden, cease

“ To cloud To-morrow  
“ With To-day’s sorrow.  
“ The meadows lose their sun and flowers,  
“ The cattle lose their leafy bowers,  
“ Autumn sweeps over the dusky moor,  
“ Winter wraps Earth in his mantle hoar ;  
“ But Spring refreshed comes back again,  
“ Over the upland, thro’ the deep lane,  
“ Down by the stream  
“ Where young lovers dream ;  
“ And the storms pass by,  
“ And Summer all joy  
“ Brings kirtled meads and sunny homes:—  
“ Maiden look forth for the bliss that comes.”

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In the grey-grim halls of yore,  
Rings the bacchanalian roar ;  
Who will say the revellers nay ?  
Gods have revelled in their day ;  
Princes made a nation groan  
With the deeds which they have done :  
’T is the right of rights divine,  
As often in our cups to shine  
As humour prompts the jovial mood ;  
And by Our Lady’s merry rood—  
Who dares to hint of lordly sot,  
Had better in oblivion rot,

Or like the May-fly pass away,  
The tiny atom of a day.  
Where 's the power and pride of blood  
If pleasures are to be withstood,  
Which the vile herd can never reach ?  
Pleasures which are made to teach,  
The wisely foolish that there must  
Be mighty differences in dust !  
Throw the dice, the billiard roll,  
Stake the body and the soul ;  
These are they who ought to know  
Whence libidinous follies flow ;  
These are they whose lives are given  
To every passion under heaven ;  
Favoured Sons of Mother Earth,  
Basking on the slopes of Mirth ;  
Ringing changes day and night  
'Twixt the Darknes and the Light ;  
Rushing down the whirling stream—  
Gilded like a gorgeous dream ;  
Here and there a glimpse of hope,  
Loft ere hands can clutch a rope ;  
Down—and down—and down for aye,  
Dashing, crashing all the way ;  
Like a whirlwind swept along,  
Cast the stormy shoals among,  
Maddening laughter, roistering glee  
Mock the bodings of the sea :

Friendly beacons, bright-eyed Day,  
Land, and Haven fade away ;  
Peace hath fled, but Riot lives,—  
Revel in all that riot gives.

*(The Orgie.)*

Harken, harken—'t is the host  
Rules the revel and the roast.

“ Bats flap up your leather wings,  
“ Owls put out your blazing rings ;  
“ Croak no more ye midnight hags,  
“ Gibing o'er your besom-nags ;  
“ Conscience, Care and Filligree,  
“ Rouse ye all and drink wi' me ;  
“ Pledge ye long, and pledge it deep,  
“ Drown old Night in muddling sleep :  
“ Full bumpers round good gentlemen,  
“ And this the toast again and again :—  
“ ‘ Merry May and pretty maid,  
“ ‘ Sunny green and amorous shade.’

“ Often wooed, and never won,  
“ Drink—by heavens it must be done ;  
“ Lovely maid and melting May,  
“ Wealth and Power the world obey !



“ Often wooed, and never won,  
“ Moping in your bower alone ;  
“ Shrinking from the love that lives  
“ Upon the charms which Beauty gives :—  
“ Pleasure waits your pretty beck,  
“ Treasure waits your pretty neck.—  
“ See !—she spurns me with her frown !  
“ Another glass—and quaff it down ;  
“ Scorn for scorn, and hate for hate,  
“ Turn, fair scorner, ere too late.”

*(Sings.)*

“ Jolly Bacchus went a-wooing,  
“ Wooing on a Summer’s Morn,  
“ When the dew was on the meadows,  
“ And the lark sung o’er the corn ;  
“ Jolly Bacchus sued a maiden,  
“ But the maiden said him—Nay ;  
“ And his heart it was a-lonely,  
“ As he sighed and went away.  
“ Jolly Bacchus went a-wooing,  
“ Wooing on a Summer’s Eve,  
“ When the birds from bush and bower,  
“ Threads of sweetest music weave ;  
“ Jolly Bacchus sued a maiden,  
“ And the maiden said him—Yes ;  
“ And his heart was like a garden,  
“ Smothered o’er with loveliness.”

“ Often wooed, and never won,  
“ Another glaſs—it ſhall be done ;  
“ Shuffle cards, and rattle dice—  
“ Bow thou Scornful Sacrifice ;  
“ Rattle dice, and blazon lights,  
“ Bluſh a-days, and flame a-nights ;  
“ Sing, ye roylſtering gallants, ſing,  
“ Bumpers, bicker, din and ding,  
“ Merrily, O, the rafters ring.

“ Fawners cringe to noble birth—  
“ Lord and Law of all the earth ;  
“ Down, ye crawling ſycophants ;  
“ Levellers, ceaſe your bluftering rants ;  
“ What are ye, ſerf-bawling mob ?  
“ Born for beggars, made to rob !

“ Vaſſal and lout,

“ I’ll ſmoke ye out.

“ Another glaſs, good gentlemen,  
“ And this the toaſt again and again :—  
“ ‘ Merry May and pretty maid,  
“ Sunny green and amorous ſhade.’

“ Often wooed, and never won,  
“ Wine, and revel, and luſty fun ;  
“ Ring old halls with maddening mirth ;  
“ Bacchus, drown this rabble earth ;  
“ Ho, ye knightly anceſtors,

“ Avondell has won your spurs ;—  
“ Ye who snuffed the Roundheads out,  
“ And scattered Noll’s rank bones about :  
“ Laugh, ye feudal effigies,  
“ Down upon your courtly knees,  
“ Each a goblet—drink like lords,  
“ Pledge us by your sacred swords.

“ Often wooed, and never won,  
“ Time and trust, it shall be done ;  
“ What’s the world ;—and who are we ?  
“ Jolly, jovial company.  
“ Up, on your feet—and, by the gods,  
“ Who first before his goblet nods,  
“ Shall pay the forfeit, and be driven  
“ From women’s eyes—man’s highest heaven.

*(Sings.)*

“ My love is a fweet, fweet maid,  
“ With showers of golden hair ;  
“ My love is a fweet, fweet maid,  
“ And I am her gallant so rare :  
“ But, my love she returns all my passion with scorn,  
“ As I woo her by night, and entreat her each morn,  
“ So I’m a poor gentleman suing forlorn ;  
“ Ha, ha, ha ! but I’ll never despair ;  
*(Chorus)* “ But I’ll never despair, no never despair ;  
“ Ha, ha, ha ! but I’ll never despair.

" My love is a sweet, sweet maid,  
     " With eyes of the brightest blue ;  
 " My love is a sweet, sweet maid,  
     " And I am her gallant so true ;  
 " But my love she doth shun me again and again,  
 " And spurns my devotion with haughty disdain,  
 " So I'm a poor gentleman suing in vain ;  
     " Ha, ha, ha ! but my love must come too ;  
 (*Chorus.*) " But my love must come too, my love must  
                     come too,  
     " Ha, ha, ha ! but my love must come too.

" Often wooed, and shall be won,  
 " Night is glowering at the Sun ;  
 " The Sun is laughing rosy red ;  
 " Jolly Morning's drunk a-bed ;  
 " Father Time has lost his way ;  
 " Pledge to the full, 't will never be day ;  
 " Stars go in and moons come out,—  
 " Merrily pass the wine about.  
 " Another glass—and let it go round ;  
 " Bacchanals up from the reeling ground ;—  
 " Drink to the maid, and May-day joys,  
 " And roistering, rollicking, revelling boys.

" Steady, steady—up proud head,  
 " Dancing halls, to-bed, to-bed ;  
 " By our ancient crest,  
 " 'The Star upon our breast,

“ We are a lord !  
“ Our knightly fword,  
“ Most sacred word ;  
“ Gallants arife,  
“ Be sober and wife ;  
“ Steady, steady,  
“ Always ready  
“ To live and die—  
“ I-i-its all my eye ;  
“ I’ll never resign ;  
“ She must be mine ;  
“ We are a lord ;  
“ Our sacred word ;  
“ Another glaſs ;  
“ You ſhall not paſs ;  
“ My charmer—Its—i-i-ts—”

*(A Servant enters in alarm.)*

“ Fire !”—

“ Vafſal and lout”—

“ Fire !”—

“ I’ll ſmoke you out.”

“ Up, up, good maſters, or you’ve drunk your laſt.

“ The Caſtle is in flames !”

“ Steady, ſteady—”

“ Haſte, gentlemen, I pray you haſte ;”

“ Scornful laſs”—

"Wake up, and save yourselves, or Avondell

"Will be a heap of ruins all.

"My lord, my lord, your faithful servant calls,

"Your old and trusty servant:

"By our Star"—

"Destruction waits your home—no help is nigh,

"And every Villager is fast asleep:

"See how the dark old rafters crack and blaze!

"My lord, my lord, lose not a moment, pray;

"Call forth these gentlemen, and save yourselves,

"And some long-treasured relics of your house:

"O, that I've lived to see this bitter night.

"Fire!—fire!—and when no instant aid can come;

"My master, O awake."

"Out, blazing Sun"—

"Ring an alarm, bring all the village up;

"S' death how it howls and leaps along the roof,

"Sweeping through every crannie furiously!

"My lord, your revelling has done this deed,

"And yet you lend no single hand to save:

"Old Avondell, you're Avondell no more.

"Fire!"

"Who talks of fire?"

"O, good my lord, 'tis I,

"Your trusty servant, who too oft hath mourned

"The evils which have brought this hour.

"Do you not see your ancient hall in flames?"

"In flames, man?—ha, ha, ha;—

“ 'Tis flames of love !—Perdition—  
“ Am I mad ?—or, do I dream ?  
“ Where ! what ! who hath done this dreadful thing ?  
“ Avondell in flames !—and I !—  
“ I'll shake it off.  
“ By heavens, I've done it all !—rouse ye, rouse ye,  
“ Friends, to your feet, and put your courage on ;  
“ I'll be your leader in this hot affray :  
“ The house of all my fathers needs our aid,  
“ Our sinews, life, and limb—Come, follow me.  
“ O most unworthy of the name I bear ;  
“ Fierce flashing Fury laughs with fiendish glee,  
“ Ancestral faces mock me through the flames  
“ That lap my craven blood.  
“ Ply, ply your powers,  
“ With every arm a giant's ;  
“ By my life, it gains upon us,  
“ Raging like a hell.  
“ Cut off the fury,  
“ Breach the blazing walls,  
“ Save but some portion of my blighted name.”

And in that burning havoc there are deeds  
Of daring such as hearts of truest mould  
Alone would venture on. In one wild hour  
Of a whole wasted life, the last of all  
His race throws off the reveller and the rake,  
And in the very teeth of gibing death

Does prodigies to awe the strongest man.  
The great veins lay like cords upon his brow,  
His eyes flash shafts of fire, and at his voice  
Men fly as if by magic ; and the halls  
Which echoed with the midnight brawl, now ring  
With trumpet-notes of courage and command :  
Where danger frowns, with scarce a gleam of hope,  
He stands within its midst a Hercules,  
Scatters the blazing brands, and madly saves  
Some precious fragment from the hungry flames.  
A brave heart has been lost and toyed away  
Which never felt its manliness till now.  
O, Opportunity ! you come too late,  
With life, estate, and good name all a-wreck.  
Yet does he strive, defiant of the worst :—  
But, 'tis in vain—Old Avondell must fall.  
Up through the roof the flaming treasures leap  
Into the deep, dense darkness of the night ;  
The startled Village rings with wild alarm ;  
Men leap from out their beds, as 'twere the dawn,  
And women with a choking terror cry—  
“ Look up, look out—'tis Avondell in flames ! ”  
And others gravely shake their heads and say—  
“ The widow's prophecy come true at last ; ”  
While children, huddled up with young affright,  
Bury their faces down amid the clothes,  
Stop up their startled ears, and breathe by stealth.



Rings the old market-bell,  
Swift the fire-engines fly,  
Buckets to the pond and well,  
No hand or aid deny :  
Ye strong men and ye weak,  
Ye youthful, maimed, and old,  
Some helpful duty seek,  
Nor gaze with arms a-fold.  
From the far hills and vales  
They crowd to the scene,  
Telling their dismal tales,  
With dread a-tween.

*(A voice.)*

“ This comes of the proud man’s scorn  
“ To the hungry poor ;  
“ See how he stands forlorn,  
“ And has no door.”

*(Another.)*

“ We should live for each other,  
“ Not for ourselves ;  
“ The lord should be the brother  
“ Of him who delves.”

*(Another.)*

“ None with a human heart,  
“ Would strike the blow ;  
“ Yet many have felt *his* smart  
“ Too well we know.”

*(Another.)*

“ Mortal, the woe has come,  
“ And stript you bare,  
“ And you have lost your home,  
“ Like Widow Ware.”

*(Another.)*

“ In this conflicting hour  
“ You have no spell ;  
“ Your name has lost its power,  
“ Lord Avondell.”

Daws from the flaming towers  
Dive into the darksome night ;  
The weird owl wildly glowers,  
And flaps the lurid light :  
No living thing can bide  
Within the fiery walls ;  
The foe, with fearful stride,

Sweeps the vast halls :  
Pictures and tapestry  
Of the olden days,—  
Things on which we eagerly  
And wistfully gaze ;  
Books buried in hoary dust,  
Armour sternly grim,  
And garniture of rust,  
And dungeons dim,  
And statued corridor,  
And tower of crime,  
Groinings, and oaken floor  
Of a by-gone time :—  
With all of Then and Now,  
The fury sports,—  
Ere morning it will plough  
The very courts.  
All's done that can be done,  
Pale Wonder's mute ;  
Havoc in the morning Sun  
Gathers its fruit.

Lop down the monarchs of the wood,  
Or strip their brawny shoulders bare ;  
Send your pet lamb or feathered brood  
Where hucksters pile their ware ;  
Watch the last going of a cherished one  
To some far land, long leagues away ;

Stand in the great, gaunt World alone  
With Night, and hail no Day ;  
See the best friend you have on earth,  
Embattled by the stormy wave ;  
Lend him your life—and bring him forth  
To lay him in the grave ;  
Hear of a great good man struck down  
In the strength and majesty of life ;—  
How dark the void ; with what a frown  
These haunt us through the strife !  
And Langley Dale awakes in gloom,  
With no glad smile to greet the morn ;  
It seems as though the hand of Doom  
Had writ on every tree—Forlorn.  
A sad, and strange, and vague distress  
Has clouded all that sunny scene,  
Which rippled with such pleasantness  
But yesterday upon the green :  
The tower of ages darkly dim,  
The stronghold of war-wielding Might,  
Now lies in ashes charred and grim,  
A-lonely as a starless night.  
And like a barren, leafless tree,  
On a black and wintry wold,  
The lord looks on his hostelry  
Silent, yet passion-souled :  
Heedless he faced the fiery glare,  
Fearless he counts the cost ;

'Tis dismal ruin everywhere,  
And all for ever lost.  
Crowded within a moment's time  
Are all the memoried years,  
Laden with chivalry and crime,  
And love, and hate, and tears :  
And things forgotten come again,  
And scenes he would not know,  
Of feudal days, and feudal men,  
And tenfold feudal woe.  
Now buried lies the Saxon tower,  
Buried so dark and deep ;  
And from this day, and from this hour  
Fades Avondell's high keep.

“ Farewell, old home of all my fires,  
“ Now home for me no more,—  
“ Sad holocaust of fierce desires,  
“ Scattered and cast ashore.

“ Thou hoary cradle of my birth,  
“ And boyhood wildly free ;  
“ Times future records of the earth  
“ Will bear no trace of thee.

“ Beneath thy smoldering ashes lie  
“ The memories of my name—  
“ Its war-renown, its chivalry,  
“ Its glory, and its fame.

“ So let it be: 'Tis the great price  
“ Swift Justice could demand ;  
“ I fought a virgin sacrifice,  
“ And found the avenging brand.

“ Now, like a tempest-driven bark,  
“ Scudding before the wind,  
“ I fade into the distant dark,  
“ And leave the wreck behind.”

GLITTER AND GLAMOUR.

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**E**QUALITE'S over the water,  
Egalite's over the sea ;  
Murder's abroad for great slaughter—  
Slaughter fraternal and free.  
Citizens clash with the forces,  
Butcher their hundreds an hour ;  
Unity wildly discourges  
The guillotine's gospeling power.  
Away with the King in a hurry ;  
Room for a myriad of Kings ;  
Barricades—grapeshot—and fury !  
Strike ! as the tocsin rings !

Elyfian glory to-morrow ;  
Victory's banner unfurled ;  
Freedom, beweltered with horror,  
Shall gladden three-parts of the world :  
Millenium reigns for a day—  
A day in the myriads of time ;  
Flapt is the flutter so gay ;—  
Vive la the motley sublime.  
The many must yield to the few,  
The few have their clutch on the crown :  
Convention is base and untrue,—  
Hurl the Conventional down :  
Up with an unroyal master,  
Peopledom Majesty, all !  
Empire !—infernai disaster !  
Empiring braggarts shall fall.  
Citizen Sovereigns asleep ;  
Coup D'tat grasping the sword ;—  
A dash—and a clash—and a leap—  
Empire the Law and the Word.  
Laugh o'er your murdered brothers ;  
Orgie the horrible fight ;  
Success the huge infamy smothers ;  
Rascaldom mad with wild delight.  
A bastard—a rone—a ghoul—  
A traitor—a knave—and a scamp ;—  
A Jupiter worthy to rule ;  
A Jove in the Senate and Camp.



Open your gates and your arms,  
Welcome the Emperor high ;  
Smother your burning alarms,  
Let the new Cæsar pass by.  
Empire is over the water,  
Empire is over the sea,  
Where reigns fair Liberty's daughter,  
Queen of Old England the free.

ARTHUR.

What's i' th' wind ?

ERNEST.

Surely our loyal guns  
Welcoming the emperor and his queen  
To London—or to England, if you will !

ARTHUR.

I will it all ; but let broad distance come  
'Twixt it and me, that these same ears which heard  
Confusion's favours heaped upon his head,  
May not be tickled by the a-la-mode  
Which rages like a fury now-a-days.  
O, world of man, where is thy paradise ?

## ERNEST.

Affuredly in Heaven, and not on Earth.  
How fares your El Dorado now ? we've seen  
A tragedy played out, where Farce and Fun  
Are staple food, with Fashion for dessert.  
Carnage was around us : the hell of strife  
Belching its horrors through the shuddering streets ;  
Homes torn and wreckt and riddled ; conscript all,  
And massacre most terrible. And you,  
With your great true heart and fiery zeal,  
Dast to the strife, and stormed it to the teeth,  
And joyed to madness at the victory-shout  
Of reeling Revolution.—Ay, and then  
We saw the Bloody Hand shoot bodeful up,  
And on Fraternity's lost Citadel  
Unfurl the flag of Empire to the world.

## ARTHUR.

O false Fraternity, and dastard slaves,  
Even baser than the master they have bought :  
'S Death, I renounce them one and all, and now  
Shake hands with Constitution, any Creed  
That's uppermost. I'll be a wizard King,—  
Quick—change—and snap my thumb ; pile trinkets up  
In huge disorder ; batter them to dross ;  
Then yield them good as new ; turn feather beds

To puddings piping hot ; cry Humbug down,  
And, *presto fumo*, humbug all the world.  
If this is base, I'll flaunt across the stage,  
And tear Great Nature's painter all to shreds ;  
Read of perfections which I never held,  
And beat them deafening on the public drum :  
Or dance—if dancing be the lucky rage ;  
Or sing—y<sup>e</sup> soft Italian melodies  
With jargon that shall make a native grin  
As he were in the stocks, and yet shall bring  
More money than your eyes have lookt upon.  
I'll sit at all the Boards, and dabble deep  
In every scheme that gets afloat ; buy stock  
With nothing, and get rich upon the gains ;  
Direct a host of Companies, or Banks,  
Or anything that's limited to self :  
I'll play on every pipe that blows ; take up  
Ten thousand shares with cash for only one :  
I'll have my villa, park, and Stock Exchange ;  
I'll be a member of the People's House !—  
The People ! the poor benighted People !—  
And when the bubble bursts—as burst it will  
And may, I'll face the swindling folly out,  
And cry peccavi !—Ruin's all the rage.  
There goes the Saxon's booming feu-de-joie ;  
Come, let us to some quiet spot where we  
Can sit and talk this hateful hour away :

'T will soon be night, and the unholy sham  
Be housed let's hope—no matter how or where.

## ERNEST.

My friend, be sure there's purpose in all this,  
And all that we have watched the doing of.  
'T is writ in great Creation thro' all time,—  
From the first dew-drop glistening in the Sun,  
To raging Ocean rushing up the stars ;  
From the minutest insect at our feet,  
To fairest Cherubim at Eden's gates ;  
From the wee daisy on the pauper's grave,  
To Lebanon's tall Cedar, wreathed with winds,  
And robed with Sacred Majesty ;—from Earth  
To Heaven 't is writ that, God is love and truth,  
Ruler Supreme, and Sovereign of all worlds ;  
Father of good, and Judge of evil men :  
And whatsoever wages we have earned,  
So surely shall we have unto the full,—  
Not here alone, but in the Aftertime !  
If this poor fitful life were Now and Then,  
With nothing nobler than the foulest brute,  
It were not worth the striving to the end !  
For 't is a passing day of sun and cloud ;  
A going out and coming in ; a pilgrimage,  
With death upon the road ; a rocket swift  
Sent flashing up, and bursting in the dark ;  
A beam—a smile—a hope—and we are gone.

ARTHUR.

And then ?

ERNEST.

The Spirit-world begins;—that world  
Of human essences beatified,  
Where everlasting Light shall clothe the hills,  
And Darkness sweep the dreary wastes of woe.  
In Time we are but for a little day ;  
In vast Eternity we are for ever !  
These passing pageants—all this might and wealth,  
And power, and pride, and boast, and vanity,—  
Are like the sportful bubbles on the sea,  
Which the first tempest heaps in frothy foam,  
And the swift whirlpool buries out of sight.  
We've done some stubborn service well you know ;  
Have lived a stern and stormy passion out ;  
Are bronzed and sinewed, strong of heart and limb ;  
One hope has failed ; yet other hopes remain :  
Then wherefore halt upon the threshold-stone ?  
The rather let us work our duty out,  
Cast up accounts, and strike the balance straight.

ARTHUR.

Let it be single and double entry,

And I am your friend,—providing it shall bring  
Me wealth—I care not how obtained.  
O, stupid mules, we chaffer on our feet,  
While millions fall before the Brazen Calf,  
And worship every god that brings them gain,  
Regardless of that God ! who gives them life.  
What is the great soul-purpose of all this ?  
Tell me who will, for I'm a-thirst to know.  
Truly we've wrought some little labour out,  
And in the first fresh glow of stalwart trust,  
Gave all our sinews, with our lives—for what ?  
A great cause strangled by the very hands  
It fought to free from bitter, burdening chains ;  
A cause whose craven helots hurled a King  
To infamy, and set a Despot up !  
In that great hour of universal Hope,  
When thrones were vacant and their tyrants fled ;  
When earth rocked like a sea, and the startled winds  
Came charged with warnings swift and ominous ;  
When high on every hill the Avenger stood,  
Hurling his fiery shafts across the world ;  
Empired Fraternity marched into Rome,  
And coupled with a well-beloved Ally,  
Murdered her youthful Freedom in the streets ;  
Riddled her ancient Monuments ; laid bare  
Her Beauty ; chained her in the dust ;  
And triumphed in the name of Liberty.

## ERNEST.

All which will truly bring its own reward,  
And cannot be averted : For so sure  
As you have echoed now the sentiments  
I ventured on to your distaste, ere yet  
This revolution, in most hideous shape,  
Confirmed them to the letter—just so sure  
Will wrong of every cast have its deserts.  
We've seen the spilling of fraternal blood  
Till cities quelled with horror. And its end !  
Deep, deepest degradation, with a chief  
Who dares not claim insurance for an hour.  
The thing abhorred becomes all absolute,  
Till wise men look each other in the face,  
And ask if such anomalies can be ?  
O, 't is as clear as Stars at Christmas-time,  
That force of arms may seize the highest power ;  
But nobleness of heart and worthy deeds  
Alone can hope to keep it to the end ;  
While Violence, tho' cased in vauntful steel,  
Rebounds upon itself. Full well we know  
That this, our own dear Fatherland, holds not  
Its greatness by the sword, but by its love  
Of justice ; its obedience to the law ;  
Its mighty progress, and its mightier toil ;  
Its moral equity ; its liberty of thought,  
And trust in God. Sweep all these towers away,

Forget the heroes who gave patriot hearts  
And precious lives to rear them in our midst,  
And England's glory flickers from that hour.  
For wanting these !—the Rule is yours, or mine,  
Or anybody's ; while the braggart tongue,  
The querulous sword, the assassin's dagger-thrust,  
The frothy mouthings, and the bilious freaks  
Of every fitful blast, must be the Law—  
Since every man's a self-elected King.  
As we do read the daily deeds of men,  
So should we mark and duly understand.

ARTHUR.

And if we will not read and understand ?

ERNEST.

Then our divinity is out of us ;  
We are but shadows, the mere outer-crusts  
Of once great men, and like the Dead Sea fruit,  
All ashes to the touch. Too seldom now  
The simple truth gets full and fairly told.

ARTHUR.

You've rightly said. For by my honest soul,  
'Twixt Creeds, Contentions, and the war and strife



Of idol-worship raving in the name  
Of Truth, the temples of the Holy One  
Are made the perfect scorn of honest men.  
For that Great Faith which made us what we are,  
We 've got another with this daily text :—  
“ Mind not the inward, so the outward shine ;  
“ Be everything to all the faithless world ;  
“ And fawn and flch according to the times.”  
You see it in the faces which you meet ;  
You feel it in the bargains which you make ;  
You hear it in the street, and on the mart.  
Look at that faithful index of man's heart,  
The face !—where find you now the noble type  
Of generations past—not here and there,  
But everywhere ? The large and lofty dome,  
The bossy forehead, eyebrow arched and frank,  
The clear cut mouth, with purpose in its form,  
The full bold nose, the eye's nobility,  
The grace and carriage of the man divine ?  
They are so rare that we may question well  
If they will ere come back again. They're now  
The fame of history—they lived, but live no more :  
And Art has fallen from its highest heaven,  
Where stately Titian reigned, and Rubens wrought  
His kindred glories out ; where Rembrant's soul  
Revealed its power, and Vandyke's all its truth.  
O, for one beauty such as Lely had  
Prolific to his hand ; one living glimpse

Of that quiescent grace which Reynolds traced,  
With native majesty, in all its forms.  
These are the written poems of men's lives ;  
The nation's history in the human face.  
Where would you have us look to find them now ?  
Above ?—'t is scented sickliness worn out ;  
Below ?—thanks to the frenzy of the age,  
We have a motley cast twixt ape and man,  
As seen in those huge hives of Mammondom,  
Where swarming thousands daily toil and sweat—  
Machines with instincts buried at their birth :  
And these our English Sisters, formed for love,  
And all the gentler duties of the heart ;  
Our brothers, from whose loins, for good or ill  
Of whatsoever kind, must spring the sons  
Of England who shall hold her glory up,  
Or cast it withered to the Ages down.  
It brings the blush of honest shame to see,  
And worse, to hear, above the lower crowd,  
The insipidities delectable,  
The perfumed jargon and the buttered talk  
Now made the exotic fashion of the times :  
Our English Maiden's Saxon laugh is gone—  
'That laugh which, rippling from her sunny heart  
Thro' the bright windows of her funnier face,  
Filled all our homes with such a heavenly joy,  
Love seemed to look on Eden come again.  
But now ! we meet her in the dazzling throng,

Or at the play, or at the family board,  
And watch for some sweet glancings of the light,  
Yet watch in vain ; for when she fain would laugh,  
And gush out tears of passionate delight,  
'T is smothered, crushed as 't were a deadly sin,  
The veriest rudeness of a vulgar past.  
She lives—talks—walks—marries—is a mother,  
And all by art, by tinfelled, tawdry art.  
'T is thus that Fashion paints our Native Rose,  
Till scentless, beautiless, it droops to earth,  
A flaunting blossom stunted in the bud.  
This is rank heresy—

ERNEST.

And yet as just  
As I have read and marked it for myself.  
But it will right itself; nay, hath done much  
To that good end. For Truth is in our midst,  
Tho' tossed and buffeted by all the storms  
That lash Life's heaving ocean into wrath.  
As 'tis in Nature, so in man—for man  
Divine is Nature deified. The Spring  
Of Childhood, rosy with young flowers ;

ARTHUR.

And truant brambles edged about with thorns ;

ERNEST.

The Summer of strong Manhood rich with corn ;

ARTHUR.

And choking tares that sap the vigorous blood ;

ERNEST.

Brown Autumn laden with the fruits of life ;

ARTHUR.

And foul Corruptions to be cast away ;

ERNEST.

And well-housed Winter, hale with silvery age ;

ARTHUR.

Asking for alms and where to lay his head.

ERNEST.

Well, be it even so. Grant that the world  
Is wickedness and fraud from end to end :—

You would uphold extermination swift,  
Forgetful that you carry with the swoop,  
Not Bad alone, but Good and Bad ; the Just  
And Unjust—hurling Wrong and Right away  
For new Perfectors who, ere well begun,  
Rush in the heavy harness of the State,  
As the young horse, hot foaming in his break,  
Darts from the traces, plunging on to death.  
Erratic Rule, like pale, spasmodic Thought,  
Gives us the Will-o'-Wisp for stars, fury  
For fruitful rain, and tinsellings for gold ;—  
A flash—a splutter—and the blinding Dark.  
Since first we left this hive of swarming life  
To lift a gauntlet for Enfranchisement—  
The light has beamed thro' many a darksome place ;  
Vice-haunts are swept away, and marts and stores,  
And pleasure-spots for recreative ease,  
Give promise of the brighter coming-time.  
How many churches !—

ARTHUR.

Ay, and palaces  
Of hell that, blazoning, corner every street,  
Piled from the meagre earnings of the poor,  
Who rob existence down to beggar's rags,  
And end their wretched lives as though no Church,  
Or Word of Truth had reverence in the land.

The Church !—heaven send it newer, stronger life,  
 And greater usefulness ; and may its power  
 Cleanse out those damning brothels of the mind  
 Whence flow the poison-streams of vicious Thought  
 To homes of Childhood and the busy hives  
 Of stunted Youth and toiling Maidenhood ;  
 And all forsooth i' th' broadest light of day.  
 O, I will trust with but one glimpse of Hope,  
 And feel the gentlest touch of Faith's fair hand ;  
 But in this sweeping up, this cleansing out,  
 The same unsightly ornaments remain.  
 I see no outward form of inward grace,  
 No marble recognitions of the men  
 Whose pioneering dances on the tongue,  
 Yet touches not the treasure of the heart !  
 Away with such adornments if you will ;  
 But since we set the Sword and Sceptre up,  
 Let's have the warriors of the Mind, the Kings  
 Of Song, the princes of eternal Truth :  
 Then Alfred would stand proudest in our midst ;  
 With Caxton and great Chaucer—noblest they  
 Of that right noble host which fill the land  
 With light ; then Bacon's mind, and Shakspeare's  
                     muse,  
 Would greet us in our streets ; and Cromwell's  
                     strength,  
 With Milton's power, strike faithless rulers dumb ;  
 Then Newton's soul would lead us to the stars,

And Howard's to the cells of guilty men.  
Instead of these!—but let the pigmies pass.  
How will you better what is bad, and end  
The rampant evils of the day?

ERNEST.

I'd teach  
The Universal State; take every child  
From Ignorance, regardless of their creed;  
Measure their capabilities of mind;  
Have them to know the wherefore they were born;  
Learn every duty which can make them men,  
Till knowing not should be so great a crime  
That dunces would be scarce. And high amid  
The lustrous beacons of this inner world,  
The Sister Arts should hold most worthy place:—  
Music to move the sympathies of thought,  
And Poetry to mark its onward course;  
With Raphael's beauty, Angelo's grand form  
Achieving their true mission in the mind.  
Hence of all tyrannies I would avoid  
The tyranny of ignorance; and such  
As fought for Say or Substance in the Laws,  
Should prove their title indisputable  
By knowing first—their selves. That man is great  
Of soul who, through a host of ills, holds on  
His way, however humble it may be,

And with one useful talent in his hand,  
Makes glad the fruitful vineyard of the State ;  
While he who rants of evils by the hour,  
Then drowns his sorrows at the bicker's brim,  
Robs cheerful Labour of its honest joys,  
Holds back the good which Reason battles for,  
Makes Hope a blank, and beggars every cause  
Which man or saint might plead for betterment.  
'Tis first to know, and then to teach. To teach,  
And knowing not, is just to find, too late,  
That ignorance, so blind and crooked-souled,  
Adds fetters to the chains it need not wear.  
Let but the strong United Voice go forth,  
And if the cause be just, no power can thwart  
The Nation's stern behest. The People rule ;  
And if true greatness leavens in themselves,  
All righteousness and freedom must abound.

ARTHUR.

There's reason in all this ; but 't is too slow  
For that enfranchisement I hunger for,  
And have done much, and would do more, to win.

ERNEST.

Alas, the fruit that bloomed so promising  
Fell ere 't was ripe ; while many a field of corn



Lies rotting in the sheaves to feed the worms,  
And give rich largesse to the shades of Death.

ARTHUR.

And so, twixt doubt and disappointment tossed,  
Man flounders in the Deeps of dark despair.  
I would have happiness for all the world,  
Yet cannot find it for myself. I strive,  
And trust, and pray, with no petition heard.  
Even as yourself, I judge from what I see,  
And that is—Power, and Wrong, and Wickedness  
High summing on the hills, where Punishment  
Seems not to reach, and Pleasure laughs at Woe.  
Stay!—What's that?

ERNEST.

Why surely a pistol-crack :  
Some harmless sportsman snapping noisy caps.

ARTHUR.

He's snapping somewhat late.

ERNEST.

The better fun.

ARTHUR.

Or folly, if he's taken unawares,  
 Or hits, perchance, a bat upon the wing.  
 By heavens 'tis more than either; yonder flies  
 An urgent messenger, and at his heels  
 A gentleman of that untarnished cloth  
 Which turns man-slaying into Honour's right !  
 Look thro' the trees:—beneath yon sunny beech  
 Which scents the evening air, two friends have met  
 In mortal strife, and at their passion's height,  
 Sought satisfaction with the shafts of death.  
 They cry for help: you have some little skill  
 In surgery !

ERNEST.

I'll render what I can  
 With all my heart. They see us,—let us haste.

*(They run to render assistance.)*

“ O pain of heart and foul.—’Tis come  
 “ At last ;—the story is all told ;—  
 “ Lift—lift me up ;  
 “ I’ll die as I have lived—  
 “ Upon my feet—and looking on the sun.  
 “ To-day—To-morrow,

“ Is the sum of all ;  
“ How short !—and yet how-long !  
“ O, fatal wound—thy torture chokes me ;  
“ Hold me—hold me up :  
“ Let not the last of all his name  
“ Suffer a coward’s end—’T is done,  
“ And should be so.—No—I will stand alone,  
“ And have no aid.—Perdizione.—  
“ Ha !—  
“ A stranger !—Yet not strange !  
“ I knew you when a boy ;  
“ I did you wrong ;  
“ I would have robbed your heart ;  
“ But Virtue keeps her crown for you ;  
“ Go—wear what is your own.  
“ You scorn me not—yet better scorn  
“ Than pity to an Avondell.  
“ Give me your ear.  
“ My home’s a hopeless wreck ;  
“ Of that proud Keep there’s scarce a stone remains ;  
“ You’ll soon return—lose not an hour ;  
“ But ask no tear of sorrow—’t is not mine ;—  
“ Yet say to her—the punishment was just,  
“ And Pride and Passion found their swift reward ;  
“ Say that the beauty of that memoried day  
“ Lit up a fire which death alone could quench.  
“ The slanderous echo of her spotless name  
“ Brought this sad deed ; and ’t is some peace

" 'To know that you have found it thus.  
 " Give me your hand—still on my feet ;  
 " So Heaven deposeeth us :—  
 " You take the jewel which I fought to wear ;  
 " I pay the forfeit with my life.—  
 " And we were boys together ;  
 " I the ambitious youth, the lord ;  
 " And you the gardener's son—noble, brave,  
 " The pride of all thy fellows—S' death ;—  
 " Your foster-father, good old Parson Frank,  
 " Hath suffered wrong from me ;  
 " I've made all reparation in my power ;  
 " This other bonds will testify :  
 " O God !—'tis stubborn work—  
 " This coming out—to die.—You'll soon return.  
 " Tell—tell her—hold me up—  
 " Tell her—I—ha—”

ERNEST.

Heaven take thee, Avondell.  
 There lies the sad and startling fact, dear friend,  
 Which you had questioned not an hour ago.  
 We do no wrong which Justice does not reach—  
 As it will reach yon coward fled away.  
 Ay, well I knew him both as boy and man :  
 He was o' th' stuff of heroes ; but his tide  
 Took fitful course, and swept him to the sea

Of Pleasure, where the passions of the hour  
Hold reckless way, heedless of rocks a-head,  
Till with a crash the quivering wreck goes down  
In the vast ocean of eternal night.

ARTHUR.

I read the lesson from the Book of Death,  
As it lies open here before my eyes,  
Remembering all Sweet Friendship hath divulged  
Of this sad matter.

ERNEST.

'T is as though some hand  
Unseen had led us from the crowd,  
That we might learn how less than nothing is  
This little life which we are patching up  
With gaudy shows and empty pageantry,  
As there could never be an ending on't.  
"You'll soon return," he said; ay, at the dawn.  
Too long perhaps I've lingered!—yet not so:  
This hour was needed, and has sternly come.  
And we shall part—to-morrow! When to meet  
Again we cannot tell.

Cold cast of clay,  
For thee no more the halls of mirth will ring,  
Nor Fortune play thee false. Alike all moods

And passions now. Whatever here betide,  
Thy soul is in His hands who gave thee life,  
And to His presence thou art swiftly gone.  
Ye who have share in this—look to him well.  
He was of high degree ; and had his youth  
Been governed as it ought, he had not been  
What now we look upon in sorrow, all.  
Come, let's away, since we can do no more.  
To-morrow we're blazon all the world ;—  
To-day we die, and vanish in the dark.

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## PARTING WORDS.

## TO ERNEST.

FAREWELL, yet not for ever. There will come  
The brighter Dawn. For this short lease of days  
We part, perchance, and take our separate ways,  
Which at the Harvest-Time shall bring us Home !  
I seek the New World for a little room  
To gather up the fragments of a life  
Which else were scattered in oblivious gloom ;  
While thou remain'st amid the nobler strife.  
O, million of the highest aim : Go, roll  
The Stone of Darkness from the tomb, and let  
The Light come forth to gladden every soul  
Whose fun had otherwise in chaos set.

'Thy way is straight—no other may'st thou go ;  
Heaven's great philanthropy hath shown thee so.

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### TO ARTHUR.

No—not for ever : 'There's a world of bliss  
In that. Awhile, and I am back again  
To do the work in humble trustfulness,  
Which stern Experience hath made most plain.  
And shall I seek thy helpful aid in vain ?  
'There's earnest work for all in Fatherland,  
If each would take their task. Go not away ;  
But take the Patriot's falchion in your hand,  
And be the first to cheer, the last to stay—  
Fair Freedom's honest Soldier come what may :  
For we should seek our life's appointed place  
Amid the ranks of stalwart-statured Mind ;  
In Truth's strong armour fall forth, and chase  
The world of Passions sweeping down the wind.

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### THE WAY HOME.

Bustle, bustle, hurry away,  
Up—and out—and on for the day ;



All the world to toil and spin,  
Wake, ye myriad marts of din :  
Bring the fiery courfers out,  
Bustle, bustle, crowd and shout :—  
Here for Land's End, John o' Groats,  
Quick—the winged meteor snorts ;  
Dover, Dublin, Milford, Perth,  
Over the sea and through the earth ;  
Years in a month, and months in an hour,  
Stay not a moment to wonder and glower ;  
'Tis the only way !—Good Granny step in it,  
Money for time—they 're off in a minute.  
Puff, puff, rumble, and smoke ;  
Quicker, thicker at every stroke ;  
Whiz, dart, rattle, and fly,  
Laugh at old Time, all space defy :  
Measure the Ocean, compass the World,  
Tunnel the hills by the Titans hurled :  
To-day we shake dear friends by the hand,  
To-morrow far off in a sunny land :  
Dashing, flashing with hideous screams,  
Threading the vallies and sweeping the streams ;  
Halt at the city—a moment's breath ;  
Off and away, 'tis for life and death :  
Over your eyes the mysteries creep,  
Quiet them down in a whirling sleep :  
Give the swift thought to the swifter wire,  
A thousand miles off they have your desire :

A bargain in Liverpool offered at seven,  
Settled in London, and chequed ere eleven :  
Say that a murderer flies from his deed,  
The messenger laughs at his drivelling speed :  
Mighty advancement—where will it end ?—  
Swim with the tide, or be drowned my friend.  
Towns to the villages, bustle for ease,  
Cities pulsating o'er meadows and leas.  
Towns of commerce, stores of granite,  
Dropt from some prolific planet :—  
You mind it well—a few years ago  
We passed on a coach, and it was not so.  
The murmur of Myriadom rifting the air ;  
Many a crescent and many a square ;  
Millions of toilers in endless smoke,  
Seething from blazing, blinding coke :  
Spinners at their whirling reels,  
Grinders at their ponderous wheels,  
Miners delving deep in the earth,  
Heaving aloft its pregnant worth :  
Gather it all and secure it fast,  
Stand a-one side—let the Train go past :  
Way for the cotton, and iron and coals,  
Fabulous merchandize, cattle in shoals ;  
Tram it, and truck it, and bale it away ;  
The beggar of yesterday princely to-day :  
Glitter and grandeur floating along,  
Crash—'t is all tinsel, not worth an old song :

Yet onward—onward—onward's the cry ;  
Barter and bargain—what will you buy ?  
Here's a whole nation's worth—paper for cash,  
Out with it—on with it, Failure will wash :  
Now is the time for our glory, or never,  
Kingdoms of Commerce—then Commerce for ever.

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From yonder little brook  
That dances by a nook,  
A gentle breeze comes thro' the steaming carriage,  
'Tis as though the blessed flowers,  
And the balmy summer bowers,  
Had consented to be wholly one in marriage.

As it fans the burning cheek,  
It seems as it could speak  
Of the happy daify-days gone long ago ;—  
The feeling is the same,  
Calls Childhood by its name ;  
We weep, and really wonder how it can be so !

Pray shut us not within  
This hot and thirsty din,  
But let the dingy window rattle swiftly down ;  
Ay, there it comes again,  
Refreshing as the rain,  
And we could clasp it as it were our precious own.

Away all musty joke,  
Put out the scented smoke  
Puffed blinding forth in ever-sickening volumes :  
Yon sunny upland spots,  
And pleasant crofts and cots,  
Are piling memory up in starry columns.

The city's far behind,  
Its throbbings out of mind,  
Or as distant as some scarce-remembered dream ;  
While the hills and vales are here,  
With the azure deep and clear,  
Where the lark pours merry music like a stream.

Could we but hear the song  
As we sweep the fields along,  
It would fill the Pilgrim's heart with freshest joy ;  
A few more whirling miles,  
And the meadows and the stiles  
Will greet us as remembered when a boy !

Gone—gone the noise and rush,  
And there comes a memory-gush  
As the porter takes our ticket—looking hard ;—  
He drove a coach-and-four,  
In the old time, now no more,  
And the coach lies up a ruin in the yard.

And the glory is all fled,  
The old Sign hangs its head,  
There's scarce a forry "whip" upon the road;  
And life has come to this;  
O sadly doth it miss  
The hearty English gusto of a London load.

He drove a 'Bus or fo  
From Paddington to Bow;  
'T was a wretched jaded shadow of the Past;  
The box-coat got worn out,  
And beat and basht about—  
He had to give the Jarvie up at last.

Ah, wherefore should it be?—  
As we gladden with the glee  
Of some long-expected pleasure just at hand,  
A something seems to mar,  
A cloud shuts out the star,  
And we walk as we were strangers in the land!

But there comes a village chime  
Like a good old Saxon rhyme,  
Making music with the blackbird's mellow lay:—  
Or haply 't is the knell  
Of a friend remembered well,  
Or some bright and bonnie maiden past away.

Not thee ! thou fairer one,  
 Or light and hope are gone,  
 And the very gall of sorrow in my heart ;  
 The long-expected bliss,  
 For this, sweet Mercy, this,  
 O say not that ere meeting we shall part.

Good shepherd of the hill,  
 Come by the laughing rill,  
 And welcome back the wanderer in the plain :  
 Your legends quaintly told  
 Of the forray days of old,  
 Start into life and battle-raid again.

Home !—and the world is glad,  
 No living thing is sad ;  
 Dear Earth is jewelled for a Festival,  
 Or Flora's bridal day,  
 And this the chosen way  
 To gather dainty wreathes to crown her brow withal.

O thou bright age of CHILDHOOD ! sweet  
 With flowers and laughter, joy-entwined ;  
 Beauty and love, twin sisters, greet  
 The hearthlings of the humblest hind.  
 Lo, toddling from his mother's side,

A bonnie blue-eyed Saxon boy,  
The lowly cotter's hopeful pride—  
Dear earnest of heart-wedded joy :  
His little feet have paced the floor,  
He bravely gains the open door,  
Where fields of flowers and sunny skies,  
Gladden his heart and brighten his eyes ;  
A firmer foot, a stronger hand,  
A dawning fancy leads him forth,  
He walks abroad upon the earth,  
And gambols in a fairy land :  
His music is the streams and birds,  
The merry bees and plaintive herds ;  
At even-time, with heart elate,  
He meets his father at the gate,  
Springs to his arms and claims the kiss  
Which crowns his little day of bliss.

Happy boy, drink in that bliss,  
'Tis the purest thou may'st know  
In a battle-world like this—  
Piled with wealth and throed with woe :  
Life to thee is all a heaven,  
Care no rapture yet hath riven ;  
Merrily laugh and bound away,  
Revel in Childhood while you may.

*(The Pilgrim meets a Strange Shepherd.)*

“Tell me, shepherd, tell me true,  
“I am fain to know from you,  
“If it be right good and well  
“With all the brotherhood who dwell  
“Amid these pleasant pasture-spots,  
“These primrose crofts and orchard plots:  
“Who is living, who is dead,  
“Since the long, long months have sped?”

“Stranger, or whate’er you be,  
“Rest awhile and list to me.—  
“One day about last New-year time,  
“When trees and hedges hung wi’ rime,  
“An aged Shepherd might be seen  
“Toiling up yonder hills a-tween—  
“His long white hair and bending form  
“Wintered with many and many a storm.  
“His step was firm, his eye was clear—  
“He said a blustrous night was near,  
“For he heard the cry of his bleating sheep,  
“And laboured up the pathless steep  
“To bring them from the bleak-browed hill,  
“And fold them where the winds were still.  
“This is no tale, so mind me well,—  
“Such a mort o’ snow has never fell  
“As all that day and all that night,  
“When Joseph lost his flock outright.  
“Mercy o’ me, the ’wildered man



“ But saved his life by half a span :  
“ The storm it raged, so deep the snow,  
“ The Shepherd knew not whither to go,  
“ While hapless bodings filled his ear—  
“ A distance off, then seeming near :  
“ He called his dog—the dog was gone,  
“ He had not seen him since the dawn,  
“ And feared that with the sorry sheep  
“ Old Rover faithful watch did keep.  
“ The drift beat high as our cottage door ;  
“ We traced the wild hills o’er and o’er—  
“ Sought every old familiar nook  
“ With weary feet and helpful crook ;  
“ But there was found no living thing  
“ The joy to Joseph’s heart to bring.  
“ Such a sad and sudden blow  
“ Struck him down in silent woe ;  
“ He looked for Spring-time like a child,  
“ And when the first green hill-top smiled,  
“ He took his crook with a wistful eye,  
“ Searched hill and valley, low and high ;  
“ And in the shelter of a rock  
“ There lay his tempest-folded flock ;  
“ And there his trusty dog did keep  
“ Death-watch o’er twice a hundred sheep.  
“ The Shepherd took it sore to heart—  
“ For the dog and he were never apart :  
“ He buried the body, but soon we spied

“ Old Rover’s skull hang down at his side.  
“ And thus he wandered as of old,  
“ Seeking his straying sheep to fold ;  
“ Roaming the hills and talking alone,  
“ Until his mind was well-nigh gone.  
“ And soon he died—just t’ other day—  
“ I’ll mind it well, as well I may ;  
“ No Shepherd all the country round  
“ Such love had gained, such fame had found :  
“ And sorrow far and near was spread  
“ To think the good old man was dead.  
“ His crook was on his coffin laid,  
“ And many a bonnie village maid  
“ Scattered his lowly grave with flowers,—  
“ Where he has lain but two short hours.  
“ Stranger, you’re sad : but had you known  
“ Old Joseph Burnam, you would own,  
“ A worthier man ne’er carried crook  
“ Since David o’ the Holy Book.  
“ He’s gone, as you and I must go,  
“ And soon the flowers will o’er us grow,  
“ As they are growing fresh and fair  
“ O’er Robert Grame and Widow Ware ;  
“ With many a neighbour gone beside,  
“ In tottering age or youthful pride.  
“ Stranger, even-tide is nigh,  
“ ’Twill be well for you and I  
“ To keep our ways in goodly fort,  
“ Since death is sure and life is short.”

## JESSIE.

*(Seated at a window of the Parsonage House.)*

At last :

The wanderer is coming home. The Noon

Has past :

To-day he's coming—and it will be soon ;

Dear Day :

And yet how long, how very long it seems

To stay.

The lengthening shadows stretch across the streams :

O come,

Thou sweetest Evening come, and in thy train

Bring home

Dear Ernest to his waiting love again ;

O come.

'Tis many months—the weary months are gone ;

Unbounded joy :

At eventide he said, and that is near,

My plighted boy.

I will away and welcome thee alone !

Yet wherefore so ?

Since unto others thou art very dear,

Full well I know :

Such hearty greeting is in store for thee,

Such full delight !—

Linger no moment on your weary way

To bring the night :

Come while the sweet birds sing with dainty glee  
Their melodies ;  
While the silvery leaves are dancing to the lay  
Of the balmy breeze.  
I wonder if he's looking as of old,  
Ere Care had made his buoyant heart a-cold ?  
When every Morning had its brighter sun,  
And Evening came ere half the joy was done ?  
He was so like a brother that I gave  
Him freely of my love, nor thought to save  
One moment's gladness that he might not share—  
Since he was my heart's pleasure everywhere !  
Like a fair cedar on a sunny hill  
He grew, hard by a merry little rill,  
Whose music murmured all about his heart,  
And hushed what wildering Sadness would impart.  
O bitterness of parting from such love !  
O happy meeting—worthier now to prove  
'The heart's unutterable devotion : Come,  
Come to these asking arms, and be at Home.

ERNEST.

*(Entering Langley Dale.)*

I stand upon thy threshold once again,  
Dear Native Dale : my hand is on the latch  
Of that inviting door which Memory lifts

With eager hand to tread the olden path  
Which leads the Pilgrim home ! I am a boy  
Again, a merry-hearted boy : I might  
Have slept upon some mossy-crested bank,  
Deep down among the flowers ; or by a stream  
Sat musing all the hours away, thro' light  
And gloom, and shade, from Morning's rosy dawn,  
To mirky Night with all the stars shut out.  
I feel thy arms about me as a child  
Its mother's love ; and I could weep for joy,  
For very joy, and hold thee to my heart,  
Till thou had'st blest me into paradise :  
For thou art very fair to look upon,  
Fairer to me than all the earth beside.  
No nook but has its halo of the past,  
No shade but has its memory-haunting song,  
All resonant of bees and buttercups,  
Of kite, and ball, and youthful merriments ;  
No home of cheerful cotter but is wreathed  
With ruddy laughter and contented smiles.  
The Village Smithy echoes as of old,  
When gleefully we flitted round its glow  
I' th' darkness of the long, lone Winter nights :  
The Saxon Church its hallowed glory keeps  
Amid co-eval trees, which plaintive breathe  
Eternal requiems o'er the silent dead ;  
The same old wooden bridge still spans the brook  
As, when a child, I watched my paper boat

Dance o'er the rippling eddies out of sight :  
The Gipsies' Lane ; the children on the green ;  
The crazy horse-trough at the hostel door ;  
The finger-post that, like a sceptre, points  
The way a-winter nights ; the ancient cross,  
Where Martyrs for the truth went down to death  
When England blazed with sacrilegious fires—  
These are the kindred links of that vast chain  
Which circles the wide earth to guide us HOME.  
And there were twenty poplars by the stream ;  
They're two the less ! and like yon ruined Keep,  
Tell us the human tale ;—'t is so with thee,  
And thee, and thee, and must be so with all.

Ye welcome shades

Of arching trees, I greet you once again ;  
For deeply nestled in your peaceful bowers  
I see the sweetest home in Christendom,  
And feel the full emotions of its hearts  
As they were throbbing on my bosom now.  
Dear Man of God—my more than father still,  
Thou gentle-hearted matron, and ye loves  
Who minister your angel duties there—  
Time has but made you dearer to my soul,  
And distance hallowed all that you have hoped,  
And prayed, and trusted for of him who now,  
With tears of joy and aspirations deep,  
Beseecheth Heaven to bless you evermore.

They see me not, yet I can see them there,

Seated about the pleasant lawn ;—not all  
My heart is asking for ;—but stay. They know  
He's coming, and 't is now upon the hour :  
A broad oak table filled with fruit and flowers,  
And kindred chairs, invite the weary one.  
Beneath his favourite elm sits Parson Frank,  
Where he so oft hath cheered the orphan-boy.  
White is his hair, and Time hath touched his brow ;  
Yet his dear face wears not a smile the less.  
Two rosy children cling about his knees,  
Their little feet in scattered daisies hid ;  
And by his side my mother's second self  
Rattles her playful bobbins with good heed,  
The well-worn pillow seated on her lap :—  
She's peering o'er her spectacles to see  
If yet he comes. The old dog lifts his head  
And faintly growls.—A happy-hearted group  
Are coming from the door, whose quaintly porch  
Is smothered o'er with ivy, and wild tufts  
Of eglantine, and honey-suckle blooms :—  
Two wedded ones ; three sisters—gentle souls ;  
And Andrew Bell, the soldier as of old,  
His clasps and medals glittering on his breast :—  
O, thou fair form !—  
For it is thine, or Eden had no love !  
At last I look upon thee, precious one,  
And eager trace thy every feature out  
As thou wert some bright star new-found in heaven.

Ay, come yet nearer, sweet, that I may kiss  
Thy sunny shadow beaming to my lips ;  
Yet closer still, and thou art lovelier still :  
Another step, and I do live again  
In that bright joy of rosy Childhood born :  
How do I bless this blessed hour and thee !  
Truest and dearest, plighted of my heart,  
'Tis thee alone—and thou art all the world.  
Jessie !—

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THE MISSION.

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**T**IS said—A lord remorsefully  
Made testament and will  
That he had done some hurtful wrong,  
And justice would fulfil.

What of his squandered wealth remained  
Was to the injured given,  
Whose useful life had all been spent  
In leading souls to heaven.

The good man plied the treasure well,  
And went unto his rest,  
His memory hallowed, and his name  
By Love and Virtue blest.

He had no son, but loved a boy  
As fondly as his own ;  
And he should lead the little flock,  
And do as he had done.

The chosen took the burden up,  
United to a heart  
Which earnestly, yet modestly,  
Fulfilled the woman's part.

And he was faithful to his trust,  
Till duty called him forth  
To hives of vice and ignorance  
That loom across the earth.

There doth he labour manfully,  
And knows nor cast nor creed :  
But renders whatsoe'er he hath  
To all who are in need.

He gathers but to give again,  
And sows the barren field,  
Trusting that at the fruitful time  
'Twill goodly harvest yield.

He takes the felon by the hand,  
And teaches him to die ;  
He walks the dens of pestilence,  
And heeds the famisht cry :

Not for a flitting summer's day,  
But thro' a stalwart life ;  
Each morning opens some new path,  
To the world of moiling strife.

His name is fragrant of his deeds,  
Yet none the half can know—  
For silently as falls the dew  
He labours to and fro.

And this is Life's great mission, Man !  
Go : do your work aright,  
Till Truth shall drive the Darkneſs out,  
And Love bring in the Light.





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